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THE FRIAR PREACHER.

YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY

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CENSOR DEPUTATUS.

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THE FRIAR PREACHER:

YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

PÈRE JACQUIN, O.P.

BY

FATHER HUGH POPE, O.P.

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TO

THOSE YOUNG MEN

WHO FEEL

A CALL TO THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

THESE PAGES ARE RESPECTFULLY

DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR AND THE TRANSLATOR

PREFACE

THIS book undertakes to set forth in brief form the origins, the objects, the ideals of the Dominican Order. Père Jacquin writes as an historian, and he has made full use of the writings of such men as the Blessed Humbert de Romans and Père Mamachi, as also of the collections of Qúetif and Echard, and the more recent scholarly work of Père Mandonet and Père Mortier. After a preliminary chapter on the work actually accomplished by St. Dominic, the author passes to the definite organization of the Order. He then treats of the Dominican ideal and of the place occupied by the Order in the long series of religious bodies in the Church. He shows how the Friars Preachers were neither monks nor simply Canons Regular, but essentially Friars. The true object of the Order is theological doctrinal teaching, whether in the pulpit or in the Professor's chair. Père Jacquin then sets forth the means to this end—namely, study quickened by prayer and directed by the various

observances of religious life. There then follows a chapter devoted to the religious formation which a Friar Preacher receives, to a sketch of the system of government which is so characteristic of the Order, and finally to the part played in the Order by the Lay-Brethren. Père Jacquin has a section devoted to the history of the restoration of the Order in France by Père Lacordaire; but this section has been omitted in the present translation, since it more intimately concerns France than the English-speaking countries where the Order is now flourishing.

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THE FRIAR PREACHER

PART I

THE FOUNDATIONS

CHAPTER I

ST. DOMINIC—THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE ORDER

THE Order of Friars Preachers was officially confirmed in 1216, but its origin dates back some years previously. The idea of the Order first occurred to St. Dominic in 1203, and from the year 1206 he worked at the realization of his project. The following series of events should be noted:

In the year 1203, Alphonsus, King of Castile, desirous of obtaining for his son Ferdinand the hand of a Princess of the Marches, entrusted the Bishop of Osma with a commission to this effect. This Bishop was no other than Diego d'Azevedo, the friend of St. Dominic, and his collaborator in the reform he had carried out among the Canons of Osma. These two men were united by a tender affection, based upon a common zeal in good works. Consequently the Bishop, when looking out for companions for his journey, naturally chose Dominic, whom he regarded as his counsellor and chief support.

And thus it was that Dominic came to form part of the embassy which set out during the summer of 1203.

But the pious travellers had hardly crossed the frontier before they found themselves in a territory infested with heresy. For Toulouse was at that time one of the centres of Catharism, and their host himself favoured the doctrines of that sect. But Dominic at once undertook his conversion. For the Saint's profound convictions stirred up in him a truly apostolic zeal. And these convictions and this zeal were all the stronger, and therefore all the more efficacious, by reason of the long years during which they had been nourished by study and the practices of a devout life in the silence and retirement of the cloisters of Osma. A conqueror's energies are tempered like steel in solitude, and great undertakings ripen in retirement.

Throughout the night, then, Dominic disputed with this man whom Providence had placed in his way; he neglected nothing, neither close reasoning nor warm exhortation, in order to bring him to a sense of the truth. Success crowned his efforts; the grace of God at length touched the wanderer's heart, he rejected his former tenets, and embraced the Catholic Faith.

In this incident Dominic saw the finger of Providence. He had found his vocation, and the work to which he was called lay clearly manifest before him. Henceforth he was to be an apostle, the apostle of heretics. He was to be so throughout his life—nay, even after his death, for, like the Father of the faithful, he was to be given a spiritual family to carry on the work he had begun. And Bernard Guidonis

tells us, after narrating this episode, that "from that moment the Blessed Dominic dreamed of giving himself up to the conversion of unbelievers and of founding a religious Order devoted to apostolic preaching."*

Consequently the first idea of the Order of Friars Preachers dates from 1203. It had not as yet, of course, the clearness of detail and minute adaptation of means to the end which contact with the reality can alone give, but the Saint had his goal clearly in view, and, moreover, he had already that certainty of success which springs from the conviction of an irresistible Divine call. Duties which he could not as yet lay aside were still to keep him far from this vineyard of the Lord, but he was to return to it, and his own personal experience was, with aid and light from on high, to show him the best means for attaining the end he had in view.

Meanwhile Diego's embassy had been foiled of its purpose. For when he and his companions came a second time into these distant regions for the purpose of bringing the young Princess to Spain, they found that she had just died. Their mission being now without an object, Diego and Dominic, freed from political affairs, took their way towards the tomb of the Apostles. At that time Innocent III. governed the Church. He received the pious pilgrims with kindness, but refused to allow Diego to resign his bishopric in order to go and preach the Gospel to the Cuman Tartars, whose savage

* *Libellus seu Tractatus Magistrorum Ordinis Praedicatorum nec non, et Priorum Provincialium Provinciae Provinciae seu Tolosanae*, in Martène-Durand, *Amplissima Collectio*, vol. vi., *c.* 398. Paris, 1729.

hordes roamed at that time among the steppes in the region of the Dnieper and the Volga. Consequently both Diego and Dominic returned to Spain.

In the beginning of the summer of 1206 they arrived at Castelnau,* a small town at the gates of Montpellier, just at the moment when the Papal Legates, Arnold Amalric, the Abbot of Citeaux, and his companions Peter and Raoul, were discussing the best means for combating the Albigensian heresy. The assembly was much perplexed, and even these robust souls were nearly giving way to discouragement. As Arnold himself said: "Our preaching only produces the most insignificant results. Every time we undertake to teach the heretics they throw in our teeth the scandalous lives of the clergy. 'Correct the lives of your clergy,' they say, 'or give up preaching.'"

Things were in this state when our travellers arrived. Diego's reputation as "a just man, a prudent man, and a man full of zeal for the faith,"† had preceded him, and on the news of his arrival he was immediately summoned to aid the council with his advice as to the course to be pursued. In the words of Blessed Jordan: "Before making any reply, the Bishop being a prudent man and experienced in Divine

* We have followed here the chronology of Pierre de Vaux-Cernay, as apparently the most reliable authority for this epoch. Echard, and recently M. Luchaire (*Innocent III., la Croisade des Albigeois*, p. 89-90; Paris, 1905), have done the same, but the Bollandists, Mamachi, and P. Balme (*Cartulaire de Saint-Dominique*, vol. i., p. 66; Paris, 1893) prefer the date 1205.

† *Liber Principii Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum*, *n.* 12; in Quetif-Echard, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum*, vol. i., p. 5; Paris, 1719.

things, asked questions concerning the rites and the habits of the heretics; he noticed the means they employed to gain recruits to their side, their preachings, conferences, and exhortations, and, above all, their display of sanctity. On the other hand, he could not fail to remark the contrast afforded by the magnificent equipages of the Prelates, their lavish expenditure, their luxury, and the richness of their apparel. Consequently he felt bound to address the assembly in stirring words: "We cannot continue as we are doing, Brethren," he said, "for it seems to me impossible to bring back to the Faith by means of preaching men who ask for example rather than precept. These heretics delude simple folk by the cloak of sanctity which they wear, by their ostentatious poverty, and their Evangelical penances. Hence, if you persist in offering to the people a very different spectacle, you will certainly not give edification, and you will destroy many souls. No one will follow you. You must show up their false sanctity by the example of your own religious life, and you must make their pretence of apostolic simplicity yield to your really humble life."

"What advice, then, would you give us?" asked the members of the Council.

"Do," said Diego, "what you see me do."

"Then," continues Jordan, "the Spirit of God came upon him; he called together his people, and sent them all back to Spain with his equipage and his baggage. Retaining only a few clerics with him, he announced his intention of remaining in the country as a missionary of the Faith. Amongst others, he kept with him the Sub-Prior Dominic, whom he held in

great esteem and loved with a peculiar affection. And when the members of the council heard his advice, they too, urged on by his example, did as he had done."

Thus commenced Dominic's apostolate in the Albigensian district. The future founder of the Order of Friars Preachers here appears only in the background; he rightly effaces himself in presence of the Bishop. But the sentiments here expressed by Diego were but those which Dominic had held since 1203. He had talked of these things to his illustrious travelling companion, and it was he more than any other who was to put them into practice.

In presence of this Albigensian heresy, proud of its doctors and its ascetics, whether real or supposed, in presence of a populace by no means indifferent to its beliefs, but anxious and halting between two sides, the Bishop and the Sub-Prior —henceforth called "Brother Dominic"—felt that immediate action was called for. Of what avail discourses, however eloquent, when men did not care to hear them? Both heretics and Catholics agreed at least in asking the clergy for deeds rather than words. A solid and unadorned theology was requisite if the errors of the heretics were to be unmasked. But, as the foundation of all apostolic work, an example of poverty, of renouncement, and of mortification, was called for. The new apostles, therefore, instituted conferences in which they refuted their adversaries, and at the same time they practised an heroic austerity.

They visited in turn Servian, Béziers, Carcassonne, Verfeil, Montreal, Fanjeaux, and Pamiers. They undertook discussions which, like the tourneys of old, sometimes lasted an

entire week. They prayed, and they suffered too; for the heretics, alive to their own inferiority, stirred up the people against these men of God. But their malice only served to set in a clearer light the patience of the men they attempted to discredit. And though with these shallow-minded people conversions were but slow, the truth little by little prevailed. Men heard Catholic doctrine explained, and they felt its force. By degrees they lost their prejudices against the clergy as the virtuous example of the latter was felt, and all this was real gain.

As early as the year 1206 Dominic had, so to speak, taken possession of this district by means of a foundation which was to serve as the starting-point for greater work to follow. After his sermon one day at Fanjeaux, several women of the class known among the Albigenses as "Perfect" came to him and told him of the misgivings his preaching had aroused in their minds. Hitherto they had clung to their errors in all good faith, but now the light had come, and they were prepared to follow its leadings without hesitation. In the end all abjured their errors in Dominic's presence. The man of God offered them a refuge; Prouille was pointed out to him by Divine Providence, and towards the close of this same year (1206) these pious converts were sheltered behind the walls of a small monastery.

This was the first Dominican foundation. And it became the rallying-point for the preachers, who had hitherto had no fixed residence. It might have been expected that with this foundation the period of initial difficulties would have been at an end, and that Dominic's plan was in a fair way to be realized. But it

was far otherwise. By God's permission various circumstances were to delay its full realization. Indeed, at one time it almost seemed as though the Saint's design was to be wrecked altogether, and his dream of a universal apostolate come to nought for lack of men and means.

In 1207, after the foundation of Prouille, Diego of Osma left Languedoc for his diocese, but his constant companion, Dominic, stayed behind. He was to remain in the heretical district and continue the apostolic work he had begun, while awaiting the return of the Bishop. At this period Dominic, though singled out by Providence, in no sense stood out as the founder of an Order. He was merely a simple Canon of Osma—as he always termed himself in his letters—the subordinate of an illustrious Bishop, under whose authority he acted and upon whom he was dependent even in his ministerial work. The real head of the mission, after the Papal Legates, was Diego himself. On his departure for Spain, however, Diego appointed Dominic his vicar, and entrusted him with the spiritual care of the missioners who resided with him; William Claret was to have charge of their temporal affairs.

The death of the good Bishop, which took place shortly after, practically added nothing to Dominic's authority. The members of the missionary staff who remained were not, strictly speaking, subject to his authority. As Blessed Jordan says, there was no tie of obedience to unite them, and they were free to leave him when they pleased. And possibly some of them did so. At any rate, those who remained were few. Jordan only mentions the names of two, William Claret from Pamiers and Dominic of

Segovia. This was but a " little flock," and it does not appear to have grown very quickly. Even in the year 1214 they only numbered seven when, according to Blessed Humbert, they went to follow the lectures of Alexander Stavensby, and this number included St. Dominic himself. Even if we add to these one or two who remained at Prouille and one or two lay brethren, it is evident that this meant small success after eight years' toilsome sojourn in Languedoc ! In 1216 only sixteen Brethren met to deliberate on the constitutions they should adopt; and it was with this tiny band that the man of God undertook the conquest of the world !

Dominic had, then, scanty help from companions; and, moreover, he failed to meet, on the part of the populace he addressed, with the moral support he needed; nor did he gain results in proportion to his apostolic zeal. Men's minds were in a defiant state, and the breath of war which passed over the country at that time dried up their hearts, so that conferences and sermons passed over them without any softening effect.

The situation must have been exceedingly painful to his apostolic soul. Indeed, at times a feeling of sadness and lassitude seems to have come over him, and to have even wrung from him a cry of discouragement. According to Stephen of Salagnac, he once said to the crowd listening to him at Prouille: " For several years I have preached to you the Gospel of peace. I have preached, I have besought you, I have wept before you. But, as the proverb runs in my own country, ' When kindness fails, it must give place to the rod !' You will find Princes and Prelates stirred up against you, and these,

alas! will gather together nations and peoples, and a great number of you will fall by the sword. Your towers will be destroyed, your walls will be thrown down, and you yourselves reduced to slavery. It is thus force prevails when kindness fails!"

But even this prophetic warning was of no avail, and things became worse when the Crusade let loose war on these districts. In face of the terrible inroad of the northern soldiery, the hitherto latent hostility to the Catholic Faith broke out into open cruelty against all who professed it, and especially against those who preached it. Dominic had his full share of these outrages; he had to endure insults, mockery, and even violent attacks. More than once was his life in danger, and his intense love of God urged him to seek martyrdom with an ardour which baffled his enemies. While these troubles continued, he could with difficulty find for his companions the bare necessaries of life. His own needs indeed were so small that the hospitable charity of a few Catholics sufficed for his support. But how were the nuns of Prouille to live? The Bishop and the Crusaders had, it is true, endowed the monastery, but not sufficiently to preserve the Sisters from all anxiety about the future. It was probably with a view to helping them that Dominic accepted the benefice of Fanjeaux, an office which had its burdens, but which also brought in a certain revenue. This information is derived from a concession made by Bishop Fulk at the request of St. Dominic. In this document he accords to the Sisters at Prouille certain tithes and first-fruits coming from the church at Fanjeaux.

This serves to show us to what the Saint was reduced by adverse circumstances! He who had dreamed of a universal apostolate, he who had detached himself from his own country and had abandoned his dignities in order to devote himself more freely to souls in need, had to become the humble parish priest of a little town, and had to tie himself down to one strip of territory and one "little flock"!

Yet it is precisely here that the real greatness of this truly heroic soul shines forth. He submitted to the inevitable. He waited in retirement for God's hour. But at the same time he in no sense abandoned what he knew to be his true vocation. That call had come from on high, and nothing that might happen on earth could avail to change it. His new life meant the adoption of new habits, but he would break with them when the time came. Nor was it long before the hour sounded. In 1215 "two upright and capable men," to use the expression of Blessed Jordan, gave themselves to St. Dominic. One was Brother Peter Seila, afterwards Prior of Limoges, the other was Brother Thomas, a man of great amiability and rare eloquence. Brother Peter owned extensive house property in the neighbourhood of Toulouse, and this he handed over to St. Dominic and his companions, so that from that time they all established themselves in that city.

This step was taken about the Easter of 1215, and in the following July the Bishop of Toulouse formally acknowledged the foundation and gave it episcopal sanction. According to the rescript, Fulk appoints Dominic and his companions as preachers in his diocese; they are "to extirpate heresy, drive out vice, teach the true Faith, and

instruct men in a moral life." The new apostles are "to live in Evangelical poverty, and are to go barefoot to preach the Gospel." To enable them to accomplish this work the more freely they are to receive from the Episcopal funds all that may be necessary; any superfluity to be given to the poor.

This was far from being the great Order of Friars Preachers with the whole world as its field of action, but it was the proximate preparation for it. Though only as yet diocesan missionaries, Dominic and his companions were quite prepared for a wider field of action, and it would only need a word from the Supreme Pontiff to constitute them the Preachers of the entire Church. Even at that early date we find the characteristics of the Order clearly sketched out, and ready to be fully developed into the Dominican Constitutions of the future: the salvation of souls is their aim, and the essential means are Evangelical poverty and study.

Nor was Dominic slow to demand the Ecclesiastical authorization he needed. When the Lateran Council opened in 1215, he, with his friend and protector, Fulk, took the road to Rome. But they were not to succeed without difficulty. The Church was in a state of ferment at that time. On all sides had arisen associations of "Penitents," of chance reformers, and of unauthorized preachers. Disregarding the Bishops, even if not actually opposed to them, these men went where they chose, and sowed amongst the people the seeds of revolt and error. Hence a doubt arose as to the prudence of authorizing any new departure on the same lines, even though the would-be apostles were good and devoted men. To do so might be

thought to afford encouragement to the many undesirable associations. The Fathers of the Council discussed the matter, and decided to take a middle course. No new Order was to be founded in the Church; but at the same time the Fathers had no wish to hinder apostolic preaching, provided always that it was done through the medium of an established Order. They even urged the Bishops to attach to themselves zealous men who should work for the conversion of heretics, but under their own direction and within the limits of their respective dioceses.

The existing feeling, then, was clearly unfavourable to Dominic's demand. But the Saints have an unfailing confidence based on the secret message that God has spoken in their hearts. Hence they wait with confidence, for the Divine work brooks no contradiction. At the very moment when all seems lost great undertakings really commence. And in the case of our Saint, Providence failed him not. For Innocent III., suddenly inspired from on high, cordially entered into Dominic's ideas and promised him his support. He said he would approve his Order, but must at the same time adhere faithfully to the decisions of the Council. And that could be done, he said, if the Brethren would but shelter themselves under some Rule already recognized in the Church.

Dominic, therefore, returned to Toulouse in order to discuss with his companions the question of a choice of Rule, and in order to inaugurate with them a legislation which was doubtless to develop with the lapse of time, but the prime principles of which were to remain for ever as the chief corner-stone of the whole

building. The Saint arrived in the south of France in the February or March of 1216, and after Easter he summoned his early disciples to Prouille. It would seem as though this man whose mind was so clear, whose will was so firm, and who was gifted with such extraordinary perseverance, yet felt that fear which great souls always feel when it is a question of taking up the reins of government with its concomitant responsibilities. At a later period we shall see him anxious to resign the government of the Order, and now, in 1216, we find him unwilling to trust his own judgment when it is a question of the Rule to be adopted. And this though he was the Founder, and none could know better than he what means would best harmonize with the end he had so long had in view. He referred the matter to a Chapter where all his Brethren were summoned.

They were sixteen in number. Bernard Guidonis has left us their names, and we must give them all here. For those first legislators are our Fathers, and their ideas, transmitted from generation to generation, like a torch that never fails, still serve to light our steps in the midst of all difficulties. These Fathers were, then, in addition to the Blessed Dominic, Matthew of France, a learned man; Bertrand of Garrigua, afterwards Provincial of Toulouse; Peter Seila, later on Prior of Limoges; Thomas of Toulouse, amiable and eloquent; Mannes the Spaniard, brother to St. Dominic according to the flesh, and his imitator in sanctity; Michael of Spain, a man wholly given to contemplation; Dominic of Spain, a man of remarkable humility, "of small attainments in science but great in virtue"; John of Navarre; Laurence the

Englishman; Stephen of Metz, remarkable for his austerity; Brother Odoric, a lay brother; William Claret; Peter of Madrid, Gomez and Michael de Uzero. Bernard Guidonis names these three last, without however guaranteeing them a place in the Order; it might be more correct to replace them by the names of three others who figure in earlier documents: Brothers Vitalis, Noel, and William Raymond.

All agreed in selecting the Rule of St. Augustine, and in adding to it, as Blessed Jordan tells us, "stricter Constitutions touching food, fasting, bedding, and clothing." The basis of these Constitutions was the "Customs" of Prémontré, which represented one of the most recent types, and were at the same time one of the most perfect examples of Constitutions for bodies of Canons Regular. The Fathers at Prouille merely modified, corrected, or added to these according to the exigencies of the end which the Order had set before itself.

Meanwhile Fulk did his share by granting to the Preachers settled in his diocese two churches situated one at Pamiers, the other, Notre Dame de Lescure, between Soreze and Puy-Laurens. Neither was the Cathedral Chapter of Toulouse behindhand, for, on Fulk's initiative, they granted to "Brother Dominic, Prior and Master of the Preachers," the chapel of St. Romanus, and allowed them to open a cemetery there "for the needs of the Brothers Canons and professed lay-brethren."

Dominic could now approach the Pope with confidence; for he was able to set before him an actual example of the life of Canons as regularly organized—namely, a church served by Friars living under the Rule of St. Augustine.

Once more, then, he set out for Rome with a view to obtaining definitive approbation. But Innocent III. was dead. He had departed this life on July 16, 1216, and on the 18th of the same month Honorius III. had succeeded him. To him Dominic addressed himself. This time no difficulties were raised, for his work followed on lines already traced in the Church. Consequently, on December 22, 1216, a Bull was issued which recognized the body of Canons established at St. Romanus.

But this declaration, cordial though it was, hardly satisfied the Saint; he and his companions were approved indeed as Canons, but nowhere in the document was there any mention of the special object which they had in view—namely, preaching. Unless this were explicitly stated, difficulties were bound to arise in the future. We may be sure that Dominic represented this strongly to the Pope; indeed, we have proof of it in the succession of documents in which, by slow and prudent steps, the startling novelty of an Order of Preachers was finally approved by Rome.

It was on December 22 that the second Papal document came as a supplement to the first. It did not state in precise terms what the scope of the Order was, but we can see a near approach to it in the words: "The Brethren of your Order will be the champions of the Faith and the true light of the world." A Bull dated January 21, 1217, however, conferred the coveted title: "Honorius, Bishop, Servant of the servants of God, to his beloved sons the Prior and the Brethren of St. Romanus, *Preachers* in the district of Toulouse. By these Apostolic Letters we enjoin and command that for the

remission of your sins, you, putting your trust in the Lord, devote yourselves to preaching the Word of God in season and out of season, so that you may fulfil in a praiseworthy manner the apostolic mission entrusted to you."

We can well imagine the joy with which Dominic returned in the course of the summer to announce this good news to his children. At that time they were established, a small and humble community, in the little cloister they had built along the wall of the chapel of St. Romanus, " with just enough cells to serve for study and for repose." We can picture them gathered round their Father and listening joyfully to the message sent them by the common Father of the Faithful. For a moment, perhaps, they forgot the smallness of their numbers and their past and present difficulties; for a moment, perhaps, they allowed themselves to dream that their hopes were about to be realized to the full.

But fresh anxieties soon came to dissipate any undue elation. Vague rumours of a coming revolution were in the air; for there were many in Toulouse who were desirous of receiving within their walls the excommunicated Raymond VI. For the " Preachers " to remain in the midst of such an upheaval would be to court destruction at the hands of the triumphant heretics. A Divine admonition, too, had warned Dominic, and, with full confidence in the future, he decided to scatter the members of his Order, with a view to securing their safety. None among them understood this decision. They pointed out to him the as yet incomplete state of his work; to scatter his sons would be to spoil his work for ever. But the man of God

regarded things from a different standpoint. Most prudent when devising his plans, he was most energetic in carrying them out when once he had arrived at a decision. "He was unflinching in carrying out his plans," remarks Jordan, "and it rarely happened that he went back upon a decision arrived at after mature reflection before God." Hence to all these objections he replied: "The seed fructifies when it is scattered; it corrupts if kept heaped up together."

Consequently August 15, 1217, saw them all gathered together at Prouille for the last time, in order to learn their respective destinations. But, at Dominic's suggestion, before separating they elected a Superior. Their choice fell on Matthew of France, who thus became Abbot of the Order, though Dominic retained the power to correct him and guide him. "Matthew," says Jordan, "was the first and last to bear the title of Abbot, for afterwards it seemed preferable that for humility's sake the head of the Order should be termed 'Master.'" This point settled, Dominic assigned to each of them his field of action. Peter of Madrid, Gomez and Michael de Uzero, and Dominic of Spain were destined for Spain. Matthew of France, Bertrand of Garrigua, John of Navarre, and Laurence the Englishman were to go to Paris, "there to study, to preach, and to found a convent," as one of them tells us. Another group, composed of Mannes, St. Dominic's brother, of Michael of Spain, and the lay-brother Odoric of Normandy, were to rejoin them there at a later period. Dominic himself, with Stephen of Metz as his companion, were to set out once more for Rome; and certain of

the Brethren were to remain in the south of France.

The Saint's prediction was speedily accomplished. The seed sown in tribulation soon brought in a rich harvest. At Paris the Brethren established themselves first of all at the gates of the Episcopal residence, and their numbers and their influence quickly grew. The Professors in the University, whose lectures they followed, held them in great esteem, and, in the following year (1218), offered them a house in the Rue Saint-Jacques. They took possession of this on August 6, and in 1219 they were already thirty in number, and had opened foundations at Limoges, Rheims, Metz, Poitiers, and Orleans. Meantime at Rome the ancient cloisters of St. Sixtus had speedily proved too small to contain the crowd of disciples who thronged round St. Dominic. But he, faithful to his principle, scattered the good seed which God had put into his hands. And while the Brethren at Lyons, to whom he had given the habit when he set out for Rome, had laid the foundations of a convent, Bologna, the second University town, hastened to receive the new apostles. The commencement of this foundation was fraught with difficulty, until the voice of Reginald of Orleans, a former Dean of that Cathedral, and now become a fisher of souls, wrought with magic effect, and succeeded in capturing for the Order large numbers of the young men who thronged to hear him.

Rome, Paris, Bologna, a part of France, Spain, and Italy were thus already occupied by the new Preachers; and all this within the space of two years. And when he looked back upon the past, Dominic could not but marvel at the

wondrous ways of Divine Providence. In quiet confidence he had awaited God's hour, and God had not failed him. In the words of Père Lacordaire: "A marvellous fruitfulness now succeeded to the slow progress which had hitherto marked his career. He who had only commenced his real career at the age of thirty-five, and who had spent twelve years in forming but sixteen disciples, now saw fresh recruits fall at his feet as the ripe corn falls at the feet of the harvester in summer. We need not be astonished at this. It is a law both of grace and of nature that powers long nursed work with extraordinary efficacy when once they are freed from the swaddling clothes which bind them. Indeed, in all things it is the same; there is a time of maturity which produces a success as prompt as it is inevitable."

Now that the Order had begun to extend, Dominic judged it time to take up once more the work of organization begun in 1216, and adapt it to the necessities of the time. Once more he made appeal to the collective judgment of all, and thus marked out by his own practice the mode of government which he preferred and which the Constitutions were to adopt in the future. It was decided to hold a General Chapter at which each of the convents should be represented by several religious. This Chapter was held at Bologna in May, 1220.

From the very outset Dominic proposed to resign the government of the Order. His Order was sufficiently established, and he dreamed of realizing a desire he had long cherished and of which he had often spoken to his intimates: he yearned to go and preach the Gospel to the Cuman Tartars. But the entire Order pro-

tested, and besought him to give up the design. He was unable to resist their earnest prayers, and he retained the government of the Order. But he asked that Definitors should be named to assist him; they were to retain their power while the Chapter sat; they were to have authority to correct and punish, to decide on controverted points, and to make laws; and this power they were to exercise over all, including the Master-General. Thus, under Dominic's initiative, certain important decisions were arrived at regarding, for the most part, the government of the Order. They decided, for instance, that the General Chapter was to be held each year. They cleared up certain doubtful points in the old Cluniac "Customs." But the most significant of all the changes they made was the one regarding the practice of poverty. Hitherto the Brethren had, while renouncing their possessions, retained certain fixed revenues. These were to be given up, and henceforward the Friars were to be entirely dependent on the charity of the faithful and the care of Divine Providence.

The Chapter of 1221, also held at Bologna, completed the work of legislation. By it the Order was divided into eight provinces: Spain, Provence, France, Lombardy, the Province of Rome, Germany, Hungary, and England. The two last named were indeed only projected, for it was this Chapter which decided to send Brethren there to found those provinces. And with the assistance of God's grace these provinces were soon in as flourishing a state as the rest.

With these two last-named missions, Hungary and England, Dominic had spread his Order over the whole of Europe. His task as Founder

was completed, and God judged him fit for his reward. He might well have expected to live for a long time yet, for he had but reached his fiftieth year, and only just before this date Sister Cecilia, who has described him for us, had seen him in all the splendour of his maturity. His body, as well as his soul, had reached that period of life when age is but the perfection and the grace of full vigour. "He was," she tells us, "of medium height, his figure spare, his countenance beautiful and somewhat ruddy, his hair and his beard fair, his eyes beautiful. He was ever joyous and affable, save when moved to compassion by his neighbour's sorrows. His hands were long and delicate, his voice noble and sonorous. He was never bald, but his religious 'corona' was always complete, though here and there tinged with grey."*

To the very end he gave to his sons the perfect example of the apostolic life which he wished to see prevail amongst them. During the last two years of his life he might have been seen passing from town to town throughout Upper Italy. He travelled accompanied by one of the Brethren, through paths often dusty and often deep in mud. He had no equipage, no horse or mule; he relied solely on his staff. On leaving town or village he would remove his shoes and throw them over his shoulder; at his girdle he carried a manuscript copy of the Gospel according to St. Matthew and of St. Paul's Epistles. From time to time he would open them, read a few lines, and then be absorbed in silent meditation, only broken by the sighs which the intensity of his prayer provoked.

* Quoted by P. Lacordaire, *Vie de Saint-Dominique*, pp. 196-197; Paris, 1872.

At times he sang hymns or repeated aloud some pious invocations. If he attached himself to any travellers he met with on the way, it was only to speak with them of God and to exhort them to the practice of a Christian life. He carried with him neither gold nor silver, but relied on the charity of the faithful for his needs. Like an ordinary beggar, he asked from door to door the small portion of food which he required for his daily needs. Once, in a little town of Lombardy, a man offered him an entire loaf; touched by the man's generosity, Dominic went down on his knees to receive it. Every day when possible he preached the word of God. He addressed himself to all, whether pilgrims or Religious, heretics or believers; like the Apostle, he made himself " all things to all men."

His last journey was to Venice to meet a much venerated friend, Cardinal Ugolino, then Legate of the Holy See. From Venice he returned to Bologna, worn out and suffering. Brother Ventura, then Prior, has left us an account of the last moments of the holy Patriarch; it is couched in terms of such touching beauty that we give it in full: " On his return, Brother Dominic, in spite of his fatigue, spoke with me, as also with Brother Rudolph, the Procurator, on the affairs of the Order. The night was already advanced. Brother Rudolph, who needed some repose, urged Dominic to rest a little, and not to come to Matins. He would not hear of this, but withdrew to the church, where he prayed long, right up to the hour for Matins, and he assisted at that Office. When Matins were over, he told me that he was suffering much in his head. And

it was then clear that he was suffering from the sickness which was to take him from us. He was obliged to lie down, but refused to rest on a bed, choosing instead a simple mattress. He asked for the novices to be called, and then, with sweet words and with a countenance full of joy, he consoled and exhorted them. In all his suffering he showed a marvellous patience, making no complaint, nor even groaning, rather did he seem full of gaiety and happiness. As he grew worse we had him carried out to Santa Maria ai Monti, as the air there was purer, and thither one day, when feeling his end approaching, he summoned the Prior and the Brethren. They came with me to the number of about twenty. When we were gathered together round his couch, Dominic began to speak to us in the most touching manner. I never heard a more pathetic sermon from his lips. It was then, I think, that he received the Last Sacraments. Just then, too, I heard a rumour among the Brethren that if he died there the monks who served the church would not allow us to take away his body, but would have him buried there. I told Dominic of this, but he said: 'Ah! God grant I may not be buried anywhere save at the feet of my Brethren! Carry me outside to that vineyard, so that I may die there, and then you can bury me in our church!' The Brethren then carried him to Bologna to our church of St. Nicholas, but they feared at every step lest he should die on the road. When we came to the church, he remained immovable for the best part of an hour. Then, calling the Prior, he said, 'Make ready.' We then prepared, the other Brethren and myself, for the solemn commendation of a departing soul. We

were all gathered round his couch, when he said, 'Wait a little.' After a space I said: 'Father, you know well in what desolation and sorrow you will leave us; remember us, then, in your prayers before God.' Then Brother Dominic, raising up his eyes and hands to heaven, said: 'Holy Father, since I have joyfully accomplished Thy will, and since I have kept and preserved those whom Thou hast entrusted to me, I commend them to Thee, do Thou keep and preserve them.' As for what follows, I had it from the Brethren; they had asked him about the future, and he replied: 'I shall be more profitable and useful to you after my death than I have been during life!' A moment later he said to me: 'Begin.' And we began the commendation of a departing soul according to the Liturgy. Brother Dominic, as far as I remember, made it with us; at least his lips moved. And whilst the prayer was being said he ceased to live. This occurred, I feel sure, at the very moment when we were repeating the words: '*Subvenite Sancti Dei, Occurite Angeli Domini, suscipientes animam ejus, offerentes eam in conspectu Altissimi.*' It was then that he breathed forth his soul."

His death took place on Friday, August 6, 1221, at midnight.

CHAPTER II

THE DEFINITIVE ORGANIZATION OF THE ORDER

AS he had promised, St. Dominic from his place in heaven protected his Order, and by his prayers won for it that rapid increase and that wonderful enthusiasm which made of it so marvellous an instrument for apostolic work.

The second Master-General, Jordan of Saxony, was a German by birth. Like so many of his compatriots, he had come to Paris to follow the lectures at the University, and in 1220 had taken his degree as Bachelor in Theology. Reginald's preaching won him to the Order, and without delay he made his profession in his hands. But when Jordan took the habit at the commencement of the Lent of 1220, Reginald was already dead, and his remains rested in the cloister of St. Marie-des-Champs. Within two months from his entering at Saint-Jacques, Jordan was sent with three other Brethren to the first Chapter held at Bologna. In 1221 he became Provincial of Lombardy, and in 1222 he was named General of the Order.

From that time the future of the youthful Order rested with him. At this critical moment it would have been easy for it to leave the path traced out by Dominic; it might easily have

dissipated its strength by taking up new and incongruous work. But though Jordan himself had, it is true, only spent two years as a religious, he had seen the holy Founder, he had received personal instructions from him, he had known Dominic's early disciples, and with them he had discussed the principles which should prevail in the Order. And now, like another Eliseus, he felt that the spirit of another Elias—all too soon withdrawn—had descended upon him. Dominic was no more, but the ideal he had had before him remained, and was to gain fresh, though peaceful, conquests.

More than any other, Jordan was the propagator of the Order. He had his Founder's wisdom, and, above all, he had the enthusiasm of an Apostle. Reginald's favourite son, he had inherited from him the gift of appealing to young men. Like him, he was "the wizard of souls." His natural qualities, his goodness, his sensitiveness, his exquisite delicacy of feeling, his acuteness of mind, combined with his extraordinary supernatural gifts to give him an unusual ascendancy over men's hearts. Parents and University Professors alike trembled lest he should wile away their sons or their pupils. They raved against him behind his back, when in his presence they fell under the influence of his irresistible charm.

Jordan chose by preference the University towns. Thus he spent alternate Lents at Paris and Bologna. And, according to the old Chronicler, the convents in these two towns were veritable hives of activity. Countless Friars entered, and thence, too, countless Friars set forth under his orders to evangelize

the world. When Jordan's arrival was announced, the Superiors of these houses prepared large numbers of habits, for they knew well that the grace of God would bring numerous novices in his train. And even in spite of such precautions the number of those who presented themselves sometimes exceeded all their expectations, and they were unable to provide for them!

Thus: "On one occasion—it was the Feast of the Purification—the Master received to the habit at Paris twenty-one students; it was an extraordinary scene, for while the Brethren wept for joy, the students who had not taken the habit wept at the loss of their companions. Amongst these new recruits were many who were afterwards to become Professors of Theology in various places. One of them was a young German whom the Master had already more than once refused admittance on account of his extreme youth. On this occasion, however, he had slipped in unnoticed amongst the others, and Jordan thought it too cruel to reject him thus publicly; for there were quite a thousand students present. So he said with a smile: 'One of you has stolen our habit!' Now the Brother Vestiarian had only made ready twenty habits, and as it was quite impossible for him to get through the crowd which had invaded the Chapter-room, the Brethren who were present vied with one another in providing a habit for the last candidate: one gave his cappa or cloak, another his tunic, a third his scapular. And it so happened that this one-and-twentieth Brother made such progress that he became a Lector and an excellent preacher.

"It often happened, too, that the Master had

to pledge his Bible in order to pay the debts of the students who thronged into the Order.

"On another Feast-day, after the sermon, Jordan admitted a certain student to the habit in the presence of several others. He turned to these latter, and addressed them as follows: 'If one of you were going alone to a great festivity would his companions be so wanting in courtesy as to refuse to accompany him? Why then, since this young man has been called by God to a great festivity, do you permit him to go unaccompanied?' And, extraordinary to relate, these words proved so efficacious that a student who hitherto had had no idea of entering the Order came forward and said: 'Master, at your word I will accompany him in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ!' And he recevied the habit with the other."

The letters which Blessed Jordan addressed to his beloved daughter in Christ, Blessed Diana of Andalo, the Prioress of the Sisters at Bologna, often sound a pæan of victory —a victory won by God, for Jordan ever acknowledged himself "a useless servant." For example, he writes from Paris in 1224: "Thanks be to God! I have succeeded well amongst the students. Between Advent and Easter about forty novices have received the habit. Amongst them are some Masters in Theology, and some others who are well educated. Moreover, we have good hopes of certain others. Give thanks to Almighty God for those we have received, and pray for those whom we hope to receive, that His grace may both produce in them a good will, and may also bring it to a happy termination." Later on, in 1235, we find him saying: "I remained in

Paris all the winter, and by God's grace a large number of men who excel in virtue and in knowledge, amongst them members of the nobility and some Masters in Theology, have entered the Order. At the moment of writing, the Brethren tell me that they amount to seventy-two in number. Do you and all the Sisters thank God for it."

It was the same in Italy. "Your prayers," he writes to Diana, "have been wonderfully heard. God has just sent us thirty novices, men of virtue and education, members of the nobility, and some of them Masters in Theology. Maître Jacques, Archdeacon of Ravenna, Provost of Bobbio, a man who has refused a Bishopric and who is at the same time one of the best Professors of Canon Law in the whole of Italy, took the habit and made profession on the Wednesday in Holy Week. At the same time, too, there entered amongst us a young Archdeacon, a very virtuous man and a member of one of the highest and noblest families in Hungary. It is the same elsewhere, for I often hear from our Brethren that they are multiplying throughout the world, and not only in numbers but in virtue as well. This will show you how true God is to His promise that He would give us the hundredfold even in this life, since, for one Brother whom we have lost perhaps, we have gained a hundred others, and better ones.

"At Vercelli the Lord has been pleased to give us many excellent subjects who are also men of learning; among them three Germans, the pick of the Germans resident in the town; four from Provence, most excellent men; and three or four Lombards of great promise."

From Padua he writes: " I have received thirty-three novices by the grace of God. All are good subjects, and, with the exception of two who are lay-brethren, men of education. Moreover, some among them are of noble extraction. We are expecting others, and already six have given in their adhesion to the Order."

Under conditions such as these the houses were soon filled to overflowing. Every year new convents arose, and this in every country. Thus in the year 1224, to take a chance instance, we find convents founded at Cologne, Magdeburg, Marseilles, Avignon, Sandomir, Caminiek, Durazzo, Strasburg, Trêves, and others in England and in the Holy Land.

Before long, indeed, Europe was not large enough for them, and while some went to the Steppes of Russia, others went to Greece, and others again to Palestine and to Africa, where they preached the Gospel to the Saracens. In a short time they had founded convents in these districts, and from 1228 onwards there were sufficient convents in Poland, Dacia, Greece, and Palestine to allow of the formation of four new provinces. But these countries were regarded at first as missionary countries, and hence, as provinces, they did not rank with the others but were termed Lesser Provinces, to distinguish them from the eight Great Provinces already existing. After 1229, however, this distinction disappeared, and all the provinces enjoyed the same rights and privileges.

And while the work of preaching thus grew, the work of teaching rapidly developed. The Preachers, who from the outset had made a humble beginning by enrolling themselves among the Professors' auditors, now began

themselves to rank amongst the Professors. Everything pointed to this development as necessary. St. Dominic and his successor had insisted upon earnest cultivation of Sacred Science; moreover, the class of recruits whom they received impelled them to take up the rôle of teachers. For many of these, as we have seen, came from among the ranks of the students who frequented the Universities; many of them were Bachelors of Theology, many Masters of Theology, some even Regents in Universities. And these men brought with them into the cloister a profound knowledge and habits of thought which had to seek their natural outlet. Here indeed was a force which was demanded by the very object for which the Order existed, and which its internal régime only served to stimulate. And when circumstances arose which called this force into action, it rapidly developed into a scientific activity for which it would be hard to find a parallel in the Church's history.

The opportunity came when, in 1229, grave difficulties arose in the University of Paris. At that time William of Auvergne, Bishop of Paris, had, in conjunction with the civil authorities, undertaken to repress with vigour the excessive turbulence of the student-classes. But, far from supporting the authorities, the Masters in the University, under pretext of maintaining their corporate privileges, sided with the students, and actually threatened that if their demands were not acceded to they would withdraw from Paris altogether! But the authorities remained firm in upholding the rights of law and order, and consequently the larger portion of the Masters dispersed, some

to Angers, some to Oxford, others to Toulouse and different places.

Hence the Bishop and the Chapter of Notre Dame, represented by their Chancellor, were bound to face the situation and provide requisite instruction for the clerics of Paris. This they did by granting a " license " to a Friar Preacher, Roland of Cremona. The latter began to teach under John of Saint-Gilles, a secular Master who, in the midst of the general exodus, had remained at Paris. Brother Roland certainly did not belie the confidence reposed in him. Already Master of Arts of the University of Bologna and, as Regent, famous for his dialectical vigour, he had entered the little convent of San Niccolò at a moment when this convent was passing through a period of extreme distress and discouragement. Later on he had come to Paris to study Theology, and, in 1229, was prepared to teach. Henceforward the Friars Preachers possessed through his instrumentality a public school aggregated to the University, where the Brethren themselves, as well as clerics from outside, could attend the lectures of a Master Regent and of Bachelors who taught under his direction.

The Friars were not slow to open a second school under the same John of Saint-Gilles mentioned above. He had been a famous physician, had later become Regent in Theology, and was now one of the most remarkable personalities in the University. He had in many ways shown his sympathy with the Friars, for he had taught them, and he had presented Roland of Cremona for his license. But now he went a step farther. " Preaching one day to the clergy in the church of the Friars

Preachers, he exhorted them to voluntary poverty. And then, in order to add example to precept, he came down from the pulpit, received the habit of the Brethren, and continued his sermon in his new dress." His retirement into the cloister deprived the students of lectures which were much esteemed, and so energetic were the protests made that John of Saint-Gilles, now a Friar Preacher, recommenced his teaching. This was in 1231.

And though these schools at Paris were the most important and the most representative, they were far from being the exception or an anomaly in the Order. In various towns, and that even during the lifetime of St. Dominic, such schools had been opened at the request of the Bishops. Even from the outset the Friars had been called upon "to preach *and teach*." It was so at Metz, at Liège, Lille, Rheims, and Dijon, where they had flourishing schools in which clerics and Canons could, in accordance with the decrees of the Lateran Council, attend lectures in Theology.

This magnificent development of the Order could not fail to attract the attention of successive Popes. Intent on reforming the abuses which had sprung from the prevailing struggle against the civil power and from the heresies which were rampant, they were on the look-out for efficacious means wherewith to stem the tide of error and corruption. And they found them in the new Orders of Friars Minor and Friars Preachers. Gregory IX., even before his elevation to the Chair of Peter, had shown the greatest kindness to St. Dominic and St. Francis, and after the death of the two Saints, gave signal proofs of his affection and goodwill

towards their sons. Hence he could count upon their ready response to any demand he might make upon them. If he stood in need of Bishops deserving of the name, if some delicate mission was to be carried out, it was to the Friars that he addressed himself. And when, following in the footsteps of his predecessors, he introduced the Inquisition with its court of specially chosen judges, these latter were selected from the two Orders of Friars.

Such confidence was an honour, but sometimes it proved a burden to those who were its recipients. For thus to withdraw Religious from their convents was to withdraw them to a great extent from the authority of their Superiors; it gave men a taste, too, for honours and dignities; and all this combined to disturb the internal peace of the Order, and even tended to introduce relaxation. Hence we are not surprised to find the Masters-General protesting against these honourable dignities. In the Chapter of 1233 Jordan of Saxony forbade any Brother, under penalty of grave fault, to consent of his own accord to be elected or postulated for as a Bishop. He protested more than once that he would rather see a Dominican die than see him accept a Bishopric. The same views were held by another Master-General at a later period, for we know in what moving terms Blessed Humbert de Romanis implored Blessed Albert to refuse the Bishopric which the Pope destined for him.

And if the Inquisition was less incompatible, from certain points of view, with the end and aim of the Order than was the Episcopate, yet by reason of the peculiar anxieties it begot, and of the hatred which it often brought upon

certain convents, it, too, sometimes proved an obstacle to the religious life as prescribed by the Constitutions. Blessed Humbert described it as "an odious" burden which hindered the success of their preaching, and one from which every Friar should shrink. Hence more than once we find the early Friars Preachers regarding the office of Inquisitor as something quite outside their vocation, although honourable in the extreme, and consequently earnestly begging the Supreme Pontiffs to free them from the burden. In 1243, for instance, the Friars Preachers sent a deputation to Pope Innocent IV. to set before him the many inconveniences which arose from the office of Inquisitor, and to beg him to free them from it. Once more, in 1255, the Friars at Besançon reiterated this petition before Alexander IV., and were more fortunate than on the previous occasion, for their request was heard.

But we are anticipating. Jordan of Saxony had, at the date last mentioned, long ceased to govern the Order; the ship in which he had sailed from Palestine was wrecked on February 13, 1237, and was entirely lost. The Chapter of 1238 elected as his successor Raymund of Pennafort, a religious already eminent for his knowledge and his virtue. Raymund had received his training in the famous law schools of Bologna, where he had afterwards taught for three years with great distinction. The Bishop of Barcelona, however, recalled him to that city, where, in 1220, he took the habit of the Friars.

But despite his yearning for solitude, honours came upon him even in his convent. The Papal

Legate, Jean d'Abbeville, had chosen him as his Canonist, but shortly afterwards the Pope himself, Gregory IX., made him Penitentiary and Papal Confessor. In addition to his ordinary work, he entrusted him with the codification of the Papal Decrees; this work, after Rome had officially sanctioned it, became the recognized textbook for Professors of Law. Five years passed in these occupations, and they were years of toil and of suffering; so much so that at the end of that time he was compelled by the state of his health to resign a task which had become too heavy for him. This was a source of deep regret to all, and the Pope offered him the Archbishopric of Tarragona, but Raymund declined the dignity and retired as a simple Religious to his convent at Barcelona, where he trusted to find the quiet and repose for which his soul yearned. But Gregory's sense of his sterling worth left him little peace, and even at Barcelona he had more than once to act in the Pope's name when civil and religious affairs in that city called for Gregory's intervention.

And it was not long before the electors, gathered at Bologna, chose Raymund to succeed Blessed Jordan in the government of the Order. It required all their efforts to induce him to accept the office, and he only consented in order to avoid the troubles which he saw would come upon his Order if he persisted in declining.

His government left the stamp of his own vigorous personality upon the Order. Jordan had been essentially a man of external affairs; Raymund naturally occupied himself with the internal affairs of the Order. A man of pre-

cision, accustomed to deal with the minute details of Canon Law, a man of energetic will, and of great austerity, he devoted his attention to the minutest points of the Rule, and required from all alike the strictest observance of it. Eminent as a jurist, he used his gifts in this direction for the well-being of the Order, and did for the Dominican Constitutions what he had already done for the Papal Decrees.

The first edition of these Constitutions dated, it would seem, from 1216. At the Chapter of Bologna, held in 1220, they had been retouched in places, and all that concerned the government of the Order had been precisely defined. Successive Chapters had added various decisions which the Most General Chapter of 1228 "referred to their respective places" in the body of the Constitutions. But from that date decisions had multiplied and had not been codified, so that in the confusion which resulted there was a danger lest many things might pass unnoticed. To obviate this, Raymund classified the whole, and divided it into Distinctions and Chapters to which it was easy to refer. His work has remained the basis of the actual Constitutions.

But the humility of this holy man, as well as his increasing infirmities, urged him to resign a charge which he had accepted very grudgingly. At the Chapter held at Bologna in 1240 he resigned his office, and withstood all the appeals of the Definitors who urged him to reconsider his decision. They were obliged to replace him, and their choice fell, in 1241, on John the Teutonic, a man already illustrious by birth and by knowledge, as well as by the fact that he had already held a Bishopric.

Many marvellous things are related of him, and the chroniclers of the Order dwell upon the ease with which he preached in either German, French, Italian, or Latin. They also speak of the zeal with which he made regular visitations of the Order. During his term of office a decision was arrived at which made this task of visitation easier. Hitherto, in accordance with established tradition, the General Chapters had been held alternately at Bologna and at Paris; but from the year 1245 they were held wherever it was thought best. When John the Teutonic died in 1252, he left the Order in full vigour.

Nor was its vitality to decline under the care of his successor, Blessed Humbert de Romanis. The new General was French, and, like Jordan of Saxony and his master and friend, Hugh de Saint-Cher, had been trained at the University of Paris. He possessed in an eminent degree the gifts which are called for in a leader of men. His natural and supernatural gifts were extraordinary and, in spite of their variety, wonderfully harmonized in a personality which was both sympathetic and vigorous. Perhaps no one ever realized to a greater degree than he the wondrous majesty of the Order as an ideal; he had fully grasped the beautiful harmony existing between its end and the means to be used in its attainment, and he understood, too, the adaptability of its organization. His spirit is enshrined in the treatise he composed on the Rule and Constitutions. There Blessed Humbert stands revealed before us; we see the alert theologian, the subtle psychologist, the prudent administrator, the sympathetic preacher, the tender father; we have the complete portrait of a most attractive soul and of a true man of

action. St. Dominic conceived the idea of the Order, and founded it; Jordan of Saxony was its great propagator; but it remained to Humbert de Romanis to give it its definite organization.

And these great qualities were sorely needed at the time, for the Order was undergoing a violent attack, which threatened to endanger its entire activity, if not its very existence. These attacks came from the University of Paris, which had received the Friars so cordially at first, but which now showed itself openly hostile to them. According to Pope Alexander IV., jealousy was the sole cause of the disturbance. The schools at Saint-Jacques had succeeded but too well, and the fame of their Masters had given offence. The very first pretext which offered was seized upon to secure the expulsion of the Friars. According to their enemies, the Friars had got possession of their Professorial Chairs by fraud, and ought, in consequence, to resign them.

But these agitators felt that their campaign would not succeed if it were merely confined to the University. They therefore allied themselves with the secular clergy; for if the Friars' teaching had provoked jealousies, their preaching, too, had stirred up discontent, for the Popes had endowed them with many privileges. Indeed, complaints on this score so far prevailed with Pope Innocent IV. that, by a decree dated November 21, 1254, he suppressed these privileges in their entirety; but this decree never came into force, for Innocent died a few days after, and his successor, Alexander IV., revoked the measure immediately on his accession, December 22, 1254.

In spite, however, of all the efforts of a Pope who made their cause his own, the situation of the Friars remained exceedingly difficult. Libellous attacks on the kind of life instituted by St. Dominic and St. Francis were circulated, and the Friars were subjected to daily annoyances; those among them who were destined to teach were not allowed to take their degrees, and their preachers were hunted down unmercifully. "See," writes Humbert to the Prior and Brethren at Orleans—"see how sorrow weighs us down and afflicts our hearts! Our souls are overwhelmed, and are pierced with the sharp sword of anguish. Innumerable vexations afflict our inmost heart, and unceasing persecution deprives us of all rest. . . . See how Satan seeks 'to sift us like wheat'! Indeed, had not the shield of God's mercy protected us, we should surely have succumbed. The Masters at Paris have published impious decrees forbidding students to enter our schools or to receive us into theirs. The students are not allowed to confess to us, they cannot give us alms, they cannot ask to be buried in our cemeteries, they cannot listen to our sermons. . . . And not content with this, our enemies have become so infuriated against us as to pursue us with injurious cries in the streets. The Brethren cannot even venture out without being pursued by a rabble from every street and house and hospice—a rabble made up of both clerics and lay-people. Men of every age and condition run after the Friars and pursue them with derisive shouts. . . . When we pass along the road we are, like Christ Himself, subjected to blows, and men even spit upon us, beat us, drag us about, and shower curses on

us; straw and rubbish rain upon the poor of Christ, and both within doors and without the children of Israel are pursued with filth and with stones. They even shoot arrows at our house, and nowhere are we safe for a moment; so much so that the King has even been obliged to send a body of his archers to guard our house as though we were in a state of siege. And what affects us even more profoundly, the Masters of Theology themselves attack us, slander us, throw doubts on our good faith, on our life, on our reputation with the people, with the nobility, the Prelates, and even with the King. We, the defenders of the Faith, the preachers of truth and its champions, we who have defended it even with our blood, we—even we—are accused of heresy!"

But these attacks went too far, and consequently failed; for the enemies of the Friars overshot the mark, and even assailed the Holy See itself. This brought about the condemnation of the cabal which had set all in motion. Alexander IV., with the co-operation of the King of France, took vigorous measures; and William de Saint-Amour, the chief instigator of the attack, was exiled with his principal followers, and the Friars retained their privileges and their schools.

Now that peace was restored, the Friars Preachers were at liberty to resume and develop their normal activities. The work of the distant missions which had been set on foot from the very beginning now entered on a new phase, and was organized on methodical lines. When Humbert was placed at the head of the Order, the Friars had already passed beyond

the frontiers of the Christian world. The opening words of a Bull of Innocent IV., dated July 23, 1253, are more convincing proof of this than any commentary: "Innocent, the Bishop, servant of the servants of God, to our beloved sons the Friars Preachers who sojourn in the lands of the Saracens, the heathen, the Greeks, the Bulgarians, the Cumans, the Ethiopians, the Syrians, the Gazarenes—that is, the Tauric Chersonese—the Goths, the Lycocians on the borders of the Euxine, the Ruthenians, the Jacobites, the Nubians, the Georgians, the Armenians, the Indians, the Tartars, the Hungarians of Greater Hungary, and the other heathen nations of the East—to all those who proceed to any other nation whatsoever — health and apostolic benediction."

The idea of giving men a special preparation for this particular missionary work had been in the minds of many previous to Humbert's generalship; indeed, it had been—partly, at least—put into execution. The initiative came from St. Raymund. When living in retirement in Spain, he had frequently come into contact with the Jews and the Arabs, and he had speedily realized that a knowledge of their respective languages was requisite if any serious attempt at their conversion was to be made. The then Master-General, John the Teutonic, fully entered into Raymund's views, and under his direction the Province of Spain founded in 1250 a school at Tunis, where Arab teachers taught Arabic to Dominicans sent thither for the purpose. The same course was adopted for Hebrew, and in a short time the Order possessed a group of missionaries and learned

men fully capable of disputing with the Jews and the Mussulmans.

And Humbert himself was not slow to forward this movement. "One of the most cherished desires I formed on accepting the heavy burden of Master-General," he writes in 1255, "was the bringing back to unity, by means of our Order, of the Christian schismatics. I yearn to see the name of Christ preached to the perfidious Jews, to the Saracens who have been so long misled by their false prophet, to the heathen idolators, to the barbarians, and to all nations, so that we may be witnesses to them, and may carry the message of salvation to the uttermost bounds of the earth. If, then, any among you feel called by God to learn Arabic, Hebrew, Greek, or any other language whatsoever, do not delay to write to me." In the following year the General was able to testify to the Order that his words had borne fruit: "How you would share my joy at the fervour of our Brethren if you knew the number and the qualifications of those who from various provinces have offered themselves spontaneously to this work, even though it might cost them their lives!"

And, indeed, it was no easy Apostolate! These early missionaries were literally mowed down by sickness and toil, and the hatred of the barbarians added to the ranks of the martyrs. The numbers of those who fell victims to the persecutors' sword during this early period was immense, and the names later on inscribed in the Calendar fail to give any idea of their true number. The Order has cherished their memory indeed, but their glory is that of a vast band whose names are known to God alone.

Nor was the study of these languages all. Faithful to its tradition of learning, the Order demanded that its missionaries should be equipped with solid weapons tempered for controversy. With this object, St. Thomas Aquinas composed his *Summa contra Gentes*, in which he set forth a reasoned explanation and a solid defence of the Catholic Faith. A few years later Raymund Marti, one of the best linguists the Order possessed, published his famous *Pugio Fidei*, in which he refuted the Jews by a minute examination of the original Hebrew text of the Bible. Science thus came to the assistance of the missionary, and the missionary repaid the debt by providing for men of learning material hitherto unknown. We know of what value the labours of the students of Greek afterwards proved, for through their labours St. Thomas was enabled to arrive at the true teaching of Aristotle.

And throughout the Order learning had attained an extraordinary degree of splendour. Amongst a body of men of whom many would, in other circumstances, have taken first rank, Albert the Great and Thomas of Aquin stood out pre-eminent. The schools at Paris were overflowing with students; new *studia generalia*, or general houses of study, constituted on the same plan as at Paris, were founded in many important centres, and the various convents spread over Europe were every one of them centres of study. In 1259 a series of rules, drawn up by the most celebrated Masters, organized the teaching throughout the entire Order and gave it new impulse.

Amongst all these preoccupations it was, perhaps, natural that the Liturgy, though regarded

as of primary importance, should not have been regulated. At the outset each convent had been content to adopt local usages; and consequently, as the Order developed, there developed along with it a strange medley of rites which resulted before long in very practical difficulties. It was decided to remedy this state of things as soon as possible by publishing liturgical texts and a ceremonial which should be used universally throughout the Order.

In order to secure this, the Chapter of 1244 bade the Definitors of the succeeding year bring with them to the Chapter to be held at Cologne their various sets of rubrics for the day and night Office, as well as their Graduals and Missals. At that Chapter four of the Brethren from the provinces of France, England, Lombardy, and Germany were formed into a Commission for the purpose of carrying this plan into effect. They were to meet at Angers for the Feast of St. Remigius. Each was to bring the day and night Office as followed in his province, and they were to work together at the task of correcting and harmonizing it, whether as regarded the text, the chant, or the rubrics. They could also, if need were, add anything that might seem to be wanting. The Commissioners met at the appointed time and set to work, and, though they had not then completed their work, the Chapter held at Paris in 1246 approved it, and imposed it on the entire Order. It was also decided that, if the Commissioners could not agree on any particular point, it was to be left to the decision of the Master-General. In addition, the Provincial of France, none other than

Humbert himself, was appointed to revise the Lectionary.

But the results hardly corresponded with anticipations, and the Chapter of 1250 had to listen to various complaints on this score. Consequently it was decided that the four Commissioners should meet again at Metz about the Feast of All Saints, and should revise their work; meanwhile, no one was to make copies of the work done at Angers. It would seem, however, that even this revision was not a success, for the Chapter of Buda-Pesth, which, in 1254, had elected Humbert as the Master-General, laid on him the burden of personally organizing the Liturgy. The two succeeding Chapters confirmed the approbation already given by anticipation, and thus insured to his work full and lasting authority. Humbert completed his task in 1256, and thus announces the good news to the Order: "You must know," he said, "that the discrepancies in the ecclesiastical Office which so many Chapters have striven to remove, have at last disappeared, thanks to God's grace. I therefore beg you to correct your copies according to this new exemplar; in this fashion we shall secure that uniformity which we have so long desired. But you must understand also that we have received much advice, and since on these points there are conflicting views, it has been found impossible to please everybody. We must all be patient, then, and put up with what does not quite agree with our own views. Lastly, the entire Office is comprised in fourteen volumes: the Ordinary, the Antiphonary, the Lectionary, the Psalter, the Collectarium, the Martyrology, the Processional, the Gradual,

the Missal, the Book of the Gospels and Epistles for the high-altar, the Missal for the smaller altars, the Book for the pulpit, and the portable Breviary."*

Two typical copies were set up, one at Paris, the other at Bologna, and no copy was to be in circulation unless it had been carefully corrected according to one of these archetypes.† In 1267, at the request of John of Vercelli, Pope Clement IV. formally approved the work.

Thus was formed the Dominican Liturgy, which was to last on through the centuries. It has passed unscathed through the storms of revolutions and reformations, and is the same now as it was in the thirteenth century.

The Order had now arrived at maturity. St. Dominic's idea, clear and precise from the very outset, had served as its guiding-star, and the protection from on high which he had promised to his children had upheld them in their struggle with the world.

Nothing was now wanting to the Order as a religious organization: its Constitutions were sufficiently elaborated, its Liturgy was definitely fixed, and St. Thomas of Aquin was building up a system of Theology which the Order was shortly to adopt as its intellectual food. The Order had extended, but in doing so had not diminished its strength; it had been assailed from without, and had triumphed; the weakness inevitable to poor humanity had

* *Litterae Encyclicae Magistrorum Generalium O. P.*, edited by Reichert, p. 42; Rome, 1900.

† The Paris archetype is still preserved in the Archives of the Order at Rome.

but lightly touched it, and its ideal had not been lowered; it could now go forward boldly, with full confidence in the future.

The ages that were to succeed would bring to it now glory and now suffering, but the Order was now a complete whole, and we shall see how it enshrined an imperishable ideal.

PART II

THE DOMINICAN IDEAL

CHAPTER I

THE PLACE OCCUPIED BY THE ORDER OF FRIARS PREACHERS IN THE SCHEME OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

BY birth the Order of Friars Preachers belongs to the family of Canons Regular. It was under this title that Pope Honorius gave his approbation to the Order in 1216, and the Rule of St. Augustine, which St. Dominic had adopted, assigned them to the same category. Even the Constitutions themselves were for the most part derived from those of the Canons of Prémontré. Their contemporaries, too, spoke of the first Friars as Canons, and they themselves used this title officially for more than twenty years. The members of the Order wore a Canon's habit, and in more than one point their life was similar to that of Canons Regular.

Towards the middle of the thirteenth century, however, it was decided to change the title of Canon into that of "Clerk." But it would be a complete mistake to see in this act any repudiation by the Friars of the stock from which they had sprung. It was simply in-

tended to remove any doubts as to their real character, and to show that they did not belong to any of the Monastic Orders, but to the body of the clergy in general. Many were inclined to regard them as monks, as men who lived detached from the world, and who, by their profession, were to be devoted simply to a life of penance, and not necessarily to the salvation of souls. By taking, then, the title of "Clerks," —a title which the Canons themselves employed at times in their Constitutions—they cut the ground from under one of the principal objections which men raised to their ministerial work.*

As Canons Regular the Dominicans have a clear and definite place in the series of Religious Orders; they represent a phase in their development; they synthesize the entire past.

The origin of the "religious life" in the Christian Church is matter of common knowledge. During the times of persecution men buried themselves in the desert in order to lead, far from the dangers of the world, and far from the tumult of business and of earthly cares, the life of Christian perfection outlined for them in the counsels of the Gospel. There they spent their days in the practice of penance, in what is known as the ascetic life.

At the outset these devotees were simple laymen, whose sole rule was the teaching of Christ or the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; they lived apart, without communication with one another, and even without dependence on

* *Cf.* H. Denifle, O. P., *Die Constitutionen des Prediger-Ordens von Jahre*, 1228, in the *Archiv für Literatur und Kirchengeschichte des Mittelalters*, vol. i. (1885), p. 168, and following.

any common Superior. Little by little their number grew, especially in peculiarly favoured regions—Egypt and Palestine for instance,—and their mode of life speedily proved an attraction for others like-minded with themselves. Thus the hermit soon found that disciples flocked to him. Some came for his advice, others asked to be allowed to spend some time under his direction. Thus around his cell gathered other cells, and so by degrees groups collected round their master, and directed their lives in accordance with his precepts and example, for these were founded on the traditions of the veteran solitaries. Sometimes, if they were sufficiently numerous, the Bishop would delegate a priest to administer to them the Sacraments, without, however, conceding to him any authority over them.

But there came a time when these heterogeneous bodies, held together solely by the individual good-will of the members, needed some organization if they would not see their institute decay. They needed some definite authority and some precise rule. The Abbot Pachomius gave them both the one and the other, and thus became the Father of the Cenobites. The Eremitical life retained its devotees, but regular monasteries were now founded, and they speedily became the ordinary place for training in the ascetic life.

In Asia Minor St. Basil developed this species of monasticism, but under a Rule somewhat modified and better adapted to local requirements. His Rule survived him, and even to this day many observe it in those same districts. The Councils of the Church, too, interested themselves in this monastic develop-

ment, and supervised the various institutions and their members. They especially aimed at insuring a monk's dependence on his Superior or Abbot; they desired to obviate the dangers arising from the tendency to wander from community to community. For men were tempted to do this in their search after higher degrees of perfection, and were apt to lose in their journeyings the stock of virtue they possessed. Thus, by slow degrees, the way was prepared for the vow of stability by which a monk engages, not simply to lead a religious life, but to lead it in a certain place and under certain definite Superiors.

All these component elements of the religious life are united in their perfection in the Benedictine abbeys; they may be truly termed the ultimate result of a long period of evolution. St. Benedict himself, by giving to his Rule the marvellous equilibrium which characterizes it, endowed the monastic idea with an unrivalled expansive force. His Rule quickly spread over the entire West, and this by reason of its breadth, its sweetness, and its atmosphere of calm tranquillity. Thus the Benedictine was throughout the Middle Ages the ideal monk, and is so now in our day under the various forms which Benedictine life has taken on. He retains the ideal born of the desert under Divine inspiration, enriched by the experience of Saints, and illumined by the wisdom of his Founder. The practical realization of this Rule has necessarily varied in the course of ages—there is, for instance, a vast difference between the monk who cleared the swamps in the sixth century, the missionary apostle of the ninth century, the feudal and ecclesiastical dignitary of the twelfth, and the man of learn-

ing of the seventeenth century. But under all these varying forms, and throughout these different epochs, the Benedictine remains essentially the contemplative, the man who before all things seeks by prayer, by an austere life, and by the work mapped out for him in his Rule, his own formation as a perfect Christian.* His one immediate object is his own personal salvation. Not that he cares nothing for the eternal salvation of others, but he is not called upon by force of his peculiar vocation to assist them in attaining to it. Priest he may be, but even if he be only a lay-monk he lacks none of the conditions requisite to the making of a perfect Benedictine. Circumstances may indeed arise—a call from the Head of the Church, for instance—which will compel him to relinquish his calm retreat and devote himself to apostolic work, or accept high ecclesiastical position. And the formation he has received will be of assistance to him in these divers occupations, but the Benedictine Order, as such, has nothing to do with work of this kind. Even study itself, even that learning which has won an undying glory for generations of monks, does not necessarily enter into his life; the unlettered Cistercian toiling in the furrow may make equal claim with Mabillon to the title of son of St. Benedict.

Meanwhile clerical life in general had, under the influence of monasticism, taken on in certain places and at intervals a peculiar character, which at length became definitely fixed, and

* Dom J. de Hemptinne, *Notice sur l'Ordre de Saint Benôit*, Abbaye de Saint-André, S.D., p. 1 and following.

which resulted in the formation of distinct organized bodies.

The life of the ministry is, in its origin, to be referred back to our Lord Himself, and is identified with the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy. Its aim is not, of itself, the sanctification of the recipient of Holy Orders; it is directly intended for the salvation of others; it is essentially a "ministry" or a "service." For its adequate fulfilment, however, it supposes certain features in the personal life of the cleric which shall elevate him, and thus prepare him for his sublime task. He must be made a fit instrument of the Sovereign Priest of all in the work of dispensing those mysterious and Divine gifts by means of which supernatural life is communicated to the soul. The more detached the priest is from the things of this world, the more truly will he become a mediator between God and man.

For the attainment of this result one means is clearly set forth, and that is asceticism, or the methodical "practice" of the virtues. In the clerical and priestly life, even more than in the life of an ordinary man, this is the one essential condition of all serious and lasting formation. Now there were to be found in the Church men who had put aside all else in order to give themselves up to these ascetic practices; they had developed this asceticism to the utmost extreme, and had made practical trial of all its known methods; they had, moreover, enshrined the results of their experience in devout books or in systematized Rules. It was but natural, then, for the Church to make use of this treasure.

It is worth remarking, too, that, whenever

reforms have been introduced with the aim of bringing back the clergy to that sanctity of life which their state demanded, recourse has always been had to monastic traditions and observances. We remember the enthusiasm which the lives of the Fathers of the desert inspired in St. Augustine, himself one of the first to organize the regular life of the clergy under Rule. Augustine, in framing his Rule, drew largely upon the teaching and example of those Eastern monks. Next to St. Augustine, the most celebrated reformer was St. Chrodegang, Bishop of Metz in the ninth century. It is said that his Rule reproduced in many of its features that of St. Benedict: "His mind, and even his memory, were so steeped in St. Benedict's Rule," writes Dom Achery, "that he appropriates words, ideas, phrases, and even entire paragraphs of it."

And when, in the twelfth century, the Canons Regular definitely organized their life, and took St. Augustine's Addresses to his clergy as the basis of their Rule, they did not neglect the monastic element of which the Benedictines offered them the best example of traditional practice. Hence both St. Augustine and St. Benedict have an equal right to be regarded as their lawgivers. Anselm of Avelburg, himself a Canon Regular, gives to both these Saints the title of "Father."*

It is true, of course, that the Canons Regular put on one side those monastic observances which were incompatible with their duties as clerics who had to minister to the faithful; but they were careful to retain all the monastic

* *Liber de Ordine Canonicorum*, passim, Migne, P.L., vol. clxxxviii., *c.* 1093 and following.

austerities which would be of assistance in forming their own characters. Thus, while essentially distinct from monks by their clerical character and the care of souls, the Canons took over all that was best in the penitential life of the monks and incorporated it into their own Constitutions. The Canon Regular, then, remained a cleric by reason of his vocation; but from certain points of view he was a monk in the observances he practised.

And the same must logically be said of the Friar Preacher. Basing his rule of life on the tradition of centuries, taking up a definite place in an organism long acknowledged by the Church, he has, so to speak, the past at his back and, in a marvellous fashion, presents a veritable synthesis of all the preceding phases of the religious life.

But St. Dominic was far from being content to remain merely a faithful disciple of those who had gone before him; his work bears the stamp of his own original personality. Already cleric and monk, he aimed at being an apostle as well. This was the novelty. It was this new feature which brought so many difficulties upon him. The harmonious combination of all these different elements in a practically realizable form is the chief characteristic of St. Dominic's work, and suffices to set upon a peculiarly lofty plane the magnificent ideal which he had set before him.

When St. Dominic appeared on the scene, preachers were certainly not wanting—rather the contrary,—for Popes and Councils alike had had reason to complain of their somewhat disturbing activity. During some fifty years

preachers of all sorts had sprung up like mushrooms along the main routes of the Christian world, especially in the South of France and in the North of Italy. Under the appellations of Vaudois, of Humiliati, or of Poor Catholics, they preached to all comers the need of penance. Many among them, led away by an inconsiderate zeal, or imbued with Manichæan errors, had fallen into heresy, and had attacked Catholic doctrine, or at least the Hierarchy of the Church. The greater number of these itinerant preachers, whether orthodox or heretic, were but simple laymen who spoke under the inspiration of the moment, and generally on practical moral subjects.

Their efforts, it is clear, could in no sense pretend to represent the traditional preaching of the Church; for this belonged by divine right to the recognized exponents of doctrine, the Bishops. These latter alone had the right to teach, and priests who preached were but their delegates. And the subject-matter of their preaching was, in addition to moral doctrine, Catholic dogma. This they set forth in its traditional form; this they defended against erroneous or false interpretations; and of this they were, throughout the ages, the authorized witnesses. The Hierarchy and the work of preaching were thus indissolubly united. The novelty, then, of St. Dominic's idea consisted in the apparent dissociation of the work of preaching from the Hierarchy by entrusting the former as an ordinary thing to a body of Religious. Still, as a matter of fact, in his ideal the office of preaching would still remain attached to the Hierarchy, since the new preachers would hold their mission dependently

upon the Pope, the Head of the Church. But they would no longer be restricted to one diocese as the delegates of a Bishop; their field of action would be co-extensive with the world itself and with the authority of the successor of St. Peter.

This particular feature of the apostolate, exercised by the Friars Preachers, serves to mark them off clearly from another Religious body which came into existence at about the same time, and to which they are often likened—the Friars Minor. Without identifying these latter with the bodies of lay-penitents, it yet remains true that in its origin the Franciscan Order was very nearly akin to these bodies.

"When Francis, with his three first companions, commenced his ministry—which was as yet not preaching properly so called, but rather exhortation—it was to love of God and to penance that he exhorted men. The programme he mapped out for his early companions was to go through the world and set before men, by example as well as by precept, the need of repentance for their sins. 'Simply tell them,' he said, 'to do penance.' A passage in the Life of Brother Giles shows what this preaching of penance meant. When Francis had given the habit to Brother Giles, he took him to preach in the Marches. The Blessed Francis, says the historian, did not as yet preach to the people, but as he passed through the towns and villages he exhorted men to do penance; and Brother Giles said to Francis's hearers: 'Yes, what he says to you is quite true; believe it. . . .'

"In the year 1210, Francis and his companions, already twelve in number, came to Rome to present themselves to Pope Innocent III., in order to obtain his approval of their Rule and of their manner of life. The Pope assented, and in his address to them clearly set forth the scope of the little association—the preaching of penance. 'Brothers,' he said, 'go in the name of the Lord and preach penance to the whole world. When Almighty God shall give you increase in numbers and in grace, let us know; we will then further your work, and will make you further concessions.'"*

And this rudimentary teaching was entrusted by Francis to clerics and lay-brethren alike in his Order. But little by little the clerical character developed, the government was made more definite, studies took a larger part in their life. Nor did the example of the Preachers fail to exercise its influence on the development of the Franciscans.† The pressure of circumstances, as well as the demands of an organic body desirous of living and developing, combined to give to the Franciscan Order—though not without certain throes from within—the form it now has. And if the two Orders of St. Dominic and St. Francis have in the course of time acquired a marked similarity, we must not forget that the original idea of each was absolutely distinct, both as regards the object they had in view and as regards the means to its attainment.

* P. Mandonnet, O.P., *Les Origines de l'Ordo de Poenitentia*, in the *Compte Rendu du Quatrième Congrès Scientifique International des Catholiques, Sciences Historiques*, p. 193-195; Fribourg en Suisse, 1898.

† René de Nantes, O.F.M. Cap., *Histoire des Spirituels dans l'Ordre de Saint-François*, pp. 127, 130, 132; Paris, 1909.

The Order of Friars Preachers seems clearly to mark out a culminating point in the history of religious life. Thus, on the one hand, it gathered together from the past the essential elements of the contemplative life as far as the clerical life allowed of this, and, on the other hand, it undertook an apostolic work which in the future was to develop in the most varied ways.

The more recent Orders or Congregations have, more or less, dissociated the elements which the Dominican Order had synthesized—contemplation, namely, and action. In the former, action, as a general rule, has a prominent place, with consequent detriment to contemplation. We do not mean by this that the activity of modern religious life is not based on the supernatural element—namely, on contemplation. For without this there is no such thing as real religious life, nor, indeed, any activity which is to prove really fruitful for souls. But in the modern Congregations contemplation is rather a question for the individual; it depends upon the needs of each, and is nourished by new methods. The Order or Congregation, considered in itself, has discarded the traditional asceticism of the religious life, and has laid aside an armour which it has adjudged too cumbersome for active work; and since it has in view solely the life of action, it has been content to evolve a less complex organization.

And each of these forms represents historically some phase in the development of religious life. Some—the simpler forms—look more particularly at one single aspect: contemplation *or* action. Others, more complex, aim

at a fruitful combination, expressed by the formula: contemplation *and* action, or, better still, action *through* contemplation.

Needless to say, all these forms of activity are approved by the Church, and each one of them appeals to the different aspirations of souls in search of a supernatural ideal.

CHAPTER II

DOMINICAN LIFE VIEWED AS A WHOLE

ALL religious life is, in itself, a striving after perfection.* Absolute perfection means perfect union with God—a union which is brought about by charity or love of God. Without this, according to the dictum of S. Paul, nought avails. A Religious, then, must essentially tend towards the acquirement of perfect charity in its two aspects—love of God and love of our neighbour.

Here below, indeed, perfection will always remain something relative by reason of our inevitable imperfections and natural limitations. Only God can love Himself as He deserves to be loved; only the Blessed in heaven, freed from all this world's fetters and fascinations, can love Him to the full measure of their powers. But, while unable to attain on earth to this ideal, men are yet obliged, whatsoever their condition, to refer all to God as their ultimate end, to subject their understanding to Him by faith, their will by charity, and to find no real rest save in Him. This is a precept; it is set before us as the least we can do, unless we would make shipwreck of our eternal salvation. This is the path mapped out for all Christians in general.

* St. Thomas Aquinas, *De Perfectione Vitae Spiritualis*, chap. i-xvii.; *Summa Theologica*, IIa. IIae. Q. CLXXXXIV., Art. I-IV.

But outside the general run of Christians there are some who would, even here on earth, strive after the ideal which the Blessed in heaven have realized. Such men "tend" towards that supreme and heavenly perfection by way of the counsels of the Gospel. For, knowing, as they do, that the obstacles to such efforts arise from transitory and perishable things and from the hold which such things can obtain over our faculties—even over our will—they strive to shake off this crushing yoke; they endeavour to live in this world as though they were not in it.

The obstacles to such a life are numerous, but they naturally fall into three categories—external goods, our tenderness towards ourselves, and our own will. Now, religious life—for it is of that we are speaking—removes these three obstacles by means of the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The vow of poverty consists in the abandonment of all personal property, and even of all independent use of material goods. The vow of chastity calls for the renunciation of marriage and of all carnal pleasure; it excludes thoughts and desires as well as acts. The vow of obedience places the will, and consequently the entire life of a man, in dependence on a Superior, who stands to him in the place of God.

By this threefold renunciation a man cuts himself from the world at one stroke, and devotes himself finally to the one Eternal Good. He could have separated himself by slow degrees from the things of earth; he could have offered to God day by day his every act and his every desire, to be laid like ripe blades of corn at the feet of the heavenly Reaper.

But in place of that he has taken *all* the acts of his life—nay, even every thought that will ever pass through his mind—and he has gathered them into one great sheaf, and presented them all by a single act to the Great Father in heaven. He has taken not only the acts emanating from his free will, but his very will itself, and has devoted it, as a holocaust, to Him Whom he is desirous of loving above all things. This act has placed him once for all in a permanent "state" of renouncement of earthly things, and of striving towards perfection. Henceforward he is no longer a servant who to-day works for his master, and to-morrow, perhaps, will quit his service; he has become the Lord's liegeman for ever. The ordinary Christian performs religious acts; the man who has thus taken up the Counsels is the "Religious."

Knowing well that to serve God is to reign, such a man has, of his own free will, taken on himself the obligation of working only for Him, and of living only for Him. The days pass, but his will remains the same, and, in a certain degree, shares even here below in the unchangeable state of the Blessed in heaven.

Such is the Religious. And a Religious only becomes possible by means of the three vows which he makes to the Church, and which the Church accepts in the Name of God. Without such vows we can have pious associations, but not a "Religious Order" properly so called.

Every Religious Order, then, demands poverty, chastity, and obedience; but in each individual Order the practice of these vows is determined by special Constitutions or Rules which vary according to the end which each

has in view. Thus the practice will not be the same in a contemplative Order as in an active one. It will vary, too, according as the aim of individual Orders is to show forth complete detachment, or to promulgate sound doctrine, or to succour the needy.

Hence in the Order of Preachers, since it is essentially an apostolic Order, the demands of the apostolate will condition the practice of the vows of religion, and will give to the Order its own peculiar features.

Thus, with regard to chastity: it is evident that the very object of the Order will exclude any such thing as complete isolation. A Friar Preacher is a debtor to all, whether men or women, when it is a question of helping them in the affair of their salvation; to assist them he must be ready to go to the uttermost parts of the earth. When inside the cloister, the enclosure and his Rule keep him; when he is outside, his virtue is his only safeguard. Even in the thirteenth century certain pious souls thought fit to take scandal at the freedom of the Friars. "There was in Lombardy a pious woman, exceedingly devout to the Blessed Virgin, and leading the life of a solitary. Hearing that a new Order of Preachers had been founded, she conceived an earnest desire to see some of them. Now, it happened that a certain Brother Paul, who was preaching in that neighbourhood, passed by with his companion. According to custom, they stopped opposite the dwelling of the recluse, and addressed her a pious exhortation. The woman at once asked to what Order they belonged. They replied that they were of the Order of Friars Preachers. But she, seeing that they were young, that they

were good-looking, and that they were decently clothed, took it upon herself to despise them; for she thought that such men could not continue to mix with the world without losing their virtue. But the following night the Blessed Virgin appeared to her with an angry countenance. 'Yesterday,' she said, 'you grievously displeased me. Do you imagine I cannot safeguard my servants who go through the world saving souls, even though they be young? Know, then, that I have taken them under my special protection. I will show you the men whom you despised yesterday.' And, raising her mantle, she showed to the recluse a multitude of Friars, and amongst them the very ones whom she had suspected the day before."*

This special protection of the Blessed Virgin was one of the supports on which the Order particularly relied. But this same confidence in the Mother of all purity did not prevent St. Dominic and his successors from recommending to the Brethren great prudence and a constant watchfulness against the assaults of the enemy.

Thus St. Dominic, at the outset of his apostolate in Languedoc, had, as we remember, recommended poverty to the Papal Legates. He himself had practised it to an heroic degree, and had left it as an heritage to his children. Certain historians, doubtless none too well informed regarding his life, have maintained that he borrowed from St. Francis the idea of renouncement of all fixed revenues, and the practice of a mendicant life. There is clearly some confusion here. Previous to meeting with the poor man of Assisi, St. Dominic had prac-

* *Vitae Fratorum*, edited by Reichert, O.P., pp. 40-41.

tised absolute renouncement, and had made it his ideal. But, unlike his glorious rival, poverty with him was never an end in itself; he never sought it for its own sake; for him it was but a means whereby he might more surely win souls. Thus, if circumstances at any time meant that the practice of poverty interfered with his apostolic work, he, without giving it up, adapted his practice of it to the one essential end. Thus in Languedoc, in a country infested with heretics, and where the missionaries were often looked upon as enemies, or where charity was but sluggish, it was difficult, if not impossible, to beg day by day what was necessary for their support. And yet it was just these heretics whom they had come to convert, and they had perforce to live amongst them. Consequently St. Dominic, finding that alms failed, accepted for a time revenues derived from certain ecclesiastical benefices. But at the same time it was stipulated that the Brethren should not carry with them more than was strictly necessary for their actual needs. Both he and his sons were the poor of Christ, and the Bishop gave them alms "because they were vowed to Evangelical poverty."* Later on, when the Order had

* F. Balme and P. Leblaiuier, *Cartulaire de Saint-Dominique*, vol. i. ,p. 516: "Si quid vero post annum superfuerit, volumus et statuimus, ut ad easdem parochiales ecclesias refundatur adornandas vel ad usus pauperum, secundum quod Episcopus viderit expedire. Cum enim jure cautum sit, quod aliquanta pars decimarum debeat semper pauperibus assignari et errogari, constat illis pauperibus nos teneri partem aliquam decimarum pocius assignare, qui pro Christo evangelicam paupertatem eligentes, universos et singulos exemplo et doctrina donis cœlestibus nituntur et elaborant ditare. . . ."

taken root in other districts, and when in the South of France the state of war which marked their early days had sensibly changed, it was felt that they could once more live on public charity. Thus it was that at the Chapter held in 1220 the Order renounced all possessions and all revenues, in order to leave itself entirely in the hands of Divine Providence. The practice of poverty varied, then, according to the times, according to circumstances, and according to the decisions of the Church. But the Order ever clung to its love of poverty, without, however, making it an end in itself or sacrificing to it its essential object—apostolical teaching.

As for obedience, it would seem that the Order has ever had a quite peculiar devotion to it. This vow alone is expressly mentioned in the formula of profession. The Religious promises "obedience to God, to the Blessed Virgin Mary, to the Blessed Dominic, and to the Master-General of the Order of Friars Preachers." He does not take a vow as regards the Rule itself, nor does he bind himself, under penalty of grave fault, to observe all it prescribes; but he binds himself to live "according to the Rule of Blessed Augustine and the Constitutions of the Friars Preachers." He also undertakes to obey precepts imposed by his Superiors, in order to secure the full and exact observance of the Rule. There is nothing which is not comprised in this obligation, and no simpler or more naïve statement of it can be found than that which is set forth in an ancient formula of address to postulants who are about to receive the habit of the Order: "As regards obedience, you know that you will be obliged

to observe our Rule and Constitutions, as well as the commands of Superiors. Henceforth you will have to admit that you have no longer any liberty, that you are in a state of entire dependence, and that you have no will of your own. For, henceforward, you can neither eat nor drink without permission; you cannot go anywhere nor do anything you have a mind to without the authorization of your Superior. And supposing you thought you would like to dwell in a certain convent, and your Superiors thought it better that you should dwell in another, you would be bound to obey them, and not to do as seemed good to yourself."

But while obedience was strict, and admitted of no reservations, the practice of the Order forbade all excessive severity or rigour. It is this quite traditional feature of the Order which St. Catharine of Siena so beautifully expressed when she said: "The Rule of our Holy Father is so broad, so joyous in character, of so sweet a savour!" Doubtless there is in these words a reflection of the fatherly kindness with which St. Dominic and Blessed Jordan ever treated their children.

Of St. Dominic, for instance, it is recorded that when the Brethren quitted Prouille to spread all over the world, the Saint bade them set out without money or resources of any kind. One of their number complained of this privation; in vain did St. Dominic implore him to take his courage in his hands; in vain did he assure him that he should want for nothing. John of Navarre refused to give in. Compassionating his weakness, Dominic gave him twelve small coins, and so allowed him to set out. At a later period John of Navarre, re-

flecting on a kindness and condescension which had perhaps saved him from throwing up all in a fit of discouragement, was humble enough to tell the story of his own weakness.*

Again, "when Blessed Jordan was once travelling with a band of young novices, they had to put up at a hostel, as there was no convent in the town. Now it happened that when they were reciting Compline together, one of these youngsters began to giggle; giggling is contagious, and soon they were all giggling together. An older Religious who was among them endeavoured to correct them, and kept making signs to them to stop. But when Compline was over, Jordan called his companion, and said to him: 'Who made you novice-master? Why did you take it on yourself to interfere?' And then, turning to the novices, he said: 'Laugh, my dear Brothers, with all your hearts. I myself give you full permission. And, indeed, you have good reason to laugh and rejoice, for you have left the devil's prison and have burst the bonds which have bound you for years! Laugh, then, as much as you like!'" And the ancient chronicler adds: "The novices were comforted at these words, yet somehow they never felt afterwards that they could laugh in any dissolute fashion."†

By his vows, then, a Friar Preacher is placed in a "state" that aims at or tends towards perfection—that absolute perfection which is

* *Dicta Testium super Inquisitione Facta de Vita, Obitu,* et *Miraculis B. Dominici,* Testis v.: Joannes Hispanus, in Quetif-Echard's *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum,* vol. i., p. 50. *Cf.* Balme-Leblaider, *Cartulaire,* vol. ii., p. 136.

† *Vitae Fratum,* edited by Reichert, pp. 144-145.

union with God through charity. The Rule and Constitutions of his Order show him how he ought in practice to realize this aim; they also furnish him with the means which enable him to walk with even step towards that goal.

For the various practices of religious life are simply meant to serve as helps to perseverance in the warfare the Religious must always wage with earthly desires. They assist in preserving the soul in full vigour, and they enable it to break with ease ties which are for ever tending to form themselves anew and thus keep the soul grovelling on earth. "There are in Religious Orders," says St. Thomas Aquinas, "certain practices which are intended to procure necessary means of support, such as work or begging our bread: these fall under the vow of poverty, and help a Religious to keep it. Other observances are intended to subdue the body, as, for example, fasting and watching: these are especially intended to preserve the Religious' vow of chastity. Lastly, others concern rather the acts of the intelligence—as, for instance, prayer and study. These come under the vow of obedience, by which we leave to others the choice of those means by which we are to attain the end of the Order in which we live."*

Now, the Friars Preachers, as we have already had occasion to remark, have taken over the monastic tradition and that of the Canons Regular as regards penitential observances. Following in the steps of long generations of Saints, the Friars have always felt that in these practices of austerity were

* *Summa Theol.*, IIa. IIae.; Q. CLXXXVIII., Art. VII. *ad* 2m.

to be found invaluable aids towards attaining union with God. The Divine Office which they have inherited from the past, and those studies of which, as we shall see further on, they became the most ardent promoters, enabled them to effect this union, or, at all events, to tend towards God with a mind always enlightened and a charity ever growing more ardent. And in this combination consisted their contemplative life.

Now this contemplative life was the actual goal of the older monastic Orders. In saying this we do not, of course, imply that, because wholly occupied with the work of his own personal salvation and that Divine charity which was its pledge, the monk was therefore regardless of his neighbour. As the Apostle St. John says: "He who pretends to love God and does not love his neighbour, is a liar." But with the monk this love of others besides God was something purely interior, and the isolation in which the dwellers in the abbeys had deliberately plunged themselves precluded them as a rule from actually going to the assistance of their neighbours. Such charity entered into their life indeed, but, though secondary, it was inevitable, because inseparable from true love of God.

Other Orders, on the contrary, had for their direct object this very charity towards their neighbour. Without in the least diminishing that Divine love which is the foundation of everything, and yet without obliging themselves to seek it by those traditional methods which they felt were incompatible with the end of their institute, they joined to this Divine love an effective love of their neighbour. They de-

sired, for God's sake, and through God, to devote themselves to the succour of those in suffering, whether of body or of soul; they wished, like the Good Samaritan, to pour oil and balm into the wounds that afflict poor humanity. Thus they became Knights-Hospitallers, they became sick-nurses, they visited them that were in prison, they ransomed captives, they succoured the poor, they comforted the afflicted; or, more than all, they distributed to sick souls, by means of their priestly ministry, the gifts of grace; they reconciled sinners to God; they brought peace to hearts that were troubled and ill at ease.

Of all these various works of charity the Friars Preachers have adopted but one as the special object of their Order, and they have put it at the head of their Constitutions—the salvation of souls through the ministry of preaching. Their aim is to break the bread of sound doctrine to them that hunger after the truth, to those whom error has led astray. They aim at showing to all, but more especially to souls which have wandered from the fold, Divine Truth in all its luminous splendour, that Divine Truth which can alone completely satisfy—and that for eternity—souls that were created for the enjoyment of the Infinite. And this task is, according to St. Thomas, the most lofty of all. "We are of far greater use to our neighbour," he declares, "when we occupy ourselves with his soul's salvation than when we devote ourselves to his bodily needs. The former task is greater than the latter, just in proportion as the soul is greater than the body." "Moreover," he adds, "it is pre-eminently acceptable to God, to Whom nothing is more

pleasing, according to St. Gregory, than zeal for souls."*

But the real originality of the Dominican ideal lay in this, that, far from preferring action to contemplation, the Order ever regarded contemplation as the essential condition for action. The activity of the Friars Preachers must be that of a vessel which overflows; their love of God must find its outlet in love of their neighbour, and they must become apostles by the sheer force of their zeal for the Divine glory. Hence contemplation can never be their goal; it cannot remain inactive and without fruit; it must be put at the service of others; it must beget the word that can convert souls, the grace, too, which can sanctify them. Contemplation and action, then, are with them interwoven, and, in the Dominican ideal, are inseparable. The one contains the other without its being always possible precisely to distinguish the one from the other. For contemplation is, in a sense, action by reason of the end it has in view; and action is but contemplation carried over into exterior work.

Hence those Dominicans make a great mistake who, in their efforts after a more intense and silent contemplation, lose sight of the life of activity, and regard it as something by way of exception, or at least as less good than contemplation. And conversely, they make no less a mistake who, with an inconsiderate zeal, give themselves up to an activity which can only be described as feverish, since it is no longer nourished at the one true source—contemplation. It is a grave mistake to allow

* *Summa Theol.*, IIa. IIae.; Q. CLXXXVIII., Art. IV.

oneself to be led astray by the intoxication of the active life, and so to neglect the practice of those virtues of the cloister which can alone give to apostolic work its true tone.

The Friar Preacher, then, is neither monk nor secular priest: his is quite a distinct character. St. Thomas Aquinas has, with his usual preciseness, furnished him with a formula for his life: *contemplata aliis tradere,* "to give to others the fruits of our contemplation." Our contemplation, then, we have to make as intense as we can, to the end that it may itself become active and the principle of our own activity. It must not merely sanctify us; it must make us apostolic men: for "Our Order has been especially instituted for preaching and for the salvation of souls."

It was indeed a bold stroke to attempt to combine all these different elements into an unique type which should be richer than any other. And this idea might have remained simply the dream of a mind filled with great but vague notions; it might have remained a mere ideal incapable of realization when brought into contact with the actualities of life; it might have had to be roughly relegated to the land of dreams.

Happily, it was not so with St. Dominic's work. Indeed we hardly know which to admire the most in him: the loftiness and breadth of his ideal, or the tact and prudence with which he laboured for its realization. Endowed with an intelligence of a high order, he knew how to weld together the different elements in his work; to each he assigned its place in the harmony of the whole; he subordinated the means to the end they were to

serve, and so enabled them each to co-operate in their own way towards the realization of the whole. A man of large experience, he knew how to estimate a man's powers; for he knew well that there are limits beyond which it is not wise to stretch the bow, and that real activity is incompatible with overwork or an excess of worry. Heroism is not a law of our nature, and works which are to last have to be based on quite other principles.

Hence St. Dominic placed at the very opening of his Constitutions that principle which serves as a clue to the whole of his practical legislation: "A Superior in his convent has the power of dispensing the Brethren whenever he thinks fit, especially when it is question of things which may interfere with study, preaching, or the good of souls." Here was another novelty: the dispensation, a thing unknown under this form to the older Religious Rules, but a principle which was to secure a great deal of precision, combined with wonderful flexibility, in the management of a complicated organism. And the vitality of the Order was to depend very largely upon the right application of this principle. To ignore it would be to reduce the Dominican ideal to a chaos where one good element would jostle another; to neglect it would be to condemn the Order to stagnation in a very brief space; to exaggerate it would mean speedy decay. Anyone of these misconceptions would mutilate the Order and falsify St. Dominic's ideal.

A dispensation is not a remedy, to be used when a Religious is sick or fatigued. The treatment of such is set forth elsewhere in the Constitutions (*cf.* the section on "The Sick").

And if a dispensation is accorded to an individual, it is intended to promote the public good. The object of a dispensation is twofold: on the one hand, it is intended to secure to a Religious sufficient strength to enable him, with ordinary prudence, to preserve his normal activity; and, on the other hand, it is intended to maintain the high standard of the Order's activity by a fair division of labour.

Undoubtedly it would be better if everyone could keep the Rule in its entirety and always. But this cannot be expected of human nature; moreover, in many cases such a thing would be incompatible with duties which have to be performed. Dispensations, then, have for their function the regularization of everything: while they tranquilize the conscience of the individual, they also put definite order into the practice of divers points of the Rule. The guiding principle is thus set forth by Humbert de Romanis: "When some point has been insisted upon as calculated to forward a certain end, it cannot be permitted to prevent the attainment of that end. . . . It is for this reason that points of Rule in the Order must not be observed with a rigidity which is calculated to preclude the attainment of the very end for which the Order itself was founded."*

We must, then, at all hazards, keep up the apostolic work which is the real aim of the Friar Preacher. But with it we must keep up those means which are its essential conditions—study and prayer. There can be no question of dispensation where these two points are con-

* *Expos. super Constitutiones Fratrum Praedicatorum* in the *Opera B. Humberti*, edited by Berthier, O.P., vol. ii., p. 38; Rome, 1889.

cerned: to dispense with these would be to destroy the Order by changing its character. But on the contrary, penitential exercises, such as fasting, abstinence, watching, the choral recitation of Divine Office, while really means to the one end, are so in a less direct way. Consequently, if in certain circumstances these things, far from helping to attain the end of the Order, actually prove a stumbling-block to it, then they have to yield to the demands of a greater good; but only in the measure in which they are really an obstacle. And dispensations determine how far this is so in each individual case.

Thus the Brethren who are occupied in the external work of preaching are by that very fact unable to fulfil all the duties prescribed by the Rule, such as fasting, the choral Office, and the rising at night. The abstinence even may be for them an impossibility. Their work, then, demands a dispensation. Within the convent, too, there are some who are destined by their Superiors to close study or to the labour of teaching. To fulfil these duties as they should, they need strength and leisure. Dispensations insure them both the one and the other.

A very necessary instrument, then, but at the same time a very delicate one, dispensations demand of the Superior in whose hands they are, a very clear sense of the Dominican ideal as well as a clear grasp of the particular circumstances in which that ideal has to be realized. Only an exceedingly prudent man—one who takes account both of higher principles and of actual contingencies—can apply dispensations in profitable fashion.

The Constitutions, however, have marked out

for him the limits within which he can dispense. For there are two real dangers which have to be avoided. On the one hand, we might reduce the Dominican ideal in practice to the mere essential elements, thus depriving it of that fulness which is its glory and its beauty, and substituting in its stead a headless trunk; while, on the other hand, we might create whole categories of Religious who were, as a regular thing, exempt from a large portion of the Rule.

Obedience serves to check this last-named tendency. For in the Order of Friars Preachers there is no such thing as an aristocracy which is beyond the reach of the law. A man who is to-day a preacher or a lector may be employed to-morrow, if Superiors see fit, in some other work which begets new obligations. The Rule is for everybody, and that until death, and each individual Religious is bound, in accordance with the promise he made at profession, to submit himself to it without reserve. If dispensations create to some extent special, though temporary, categories, and thus enable the Order to enjoy a high degree of activity, the gathering together of these categories in one body will save the ideal from crumbling away or being mutilated. No single Religious can hope to reproduce in his own person the whole Dominican life; but what the individual cannot hope to do, the convent as a whole can do. Preaching, study, prayer, and penitential observances ought to be perfectly represented there and ought to harmonize with one another. Hence the Constitutions, in order to preserve the Rule in its integrity, forbid a Superior to dispense the whole community at the same

time. Thus we have variety in the individuals, but unity in the whole body. The one is not opposed to the other, but each completes the other, provided always that each individual is careful to keep alive in his own soul the perfect ideal, and does not, as far as in him lies, debase it.

The greater the variety, the richer the final result. For this reason the Order, with a view to maintaining its activity in full vigour and expansion, has always set its face against small communities; for experience shows that where the Religious are few in number, complete regularity is difficult to attain, and the enthusiasm of Dominican life is inevitably lacking.

CHAPTER III

THE OBJECT OF THE ORDER OF FRIARS PREACHERS IS PREACHING AND TEACHING

WHEN St. Dominic found himself for the first time face to face with the invasions of heresy, and when the thought first occurred to him of devoting himself to the service of souls that had gone astray, he at once decided to do so by means of preaching. To spread abroad the Gospel tidings, to unmask the wiles of error, to work for the salvation of men by setting plainly before them the light of Divine Truth: that was his first aim.

If, in agreement with the Bishop of Osma, he recommended to the Papal Legates a holy poverty and a simple exterior, he did so simply in order to meet the prejudices of the heretics, and that he might instruct them the more easily. If he himself led for many years a life even more austere than that of the "Perfect" Albigenses, he did so simply in order to deprive these latter of the advantage they had for the nonce gained over the Catholics by the austerity of their own lives. Undoubtedly St. Dominic esteemed penance for its own sake, and knew well the value of mortification; but more than all, he chose these things as a preparation for his apostolate of preaching. When he drew nigh to any town or village, he wept, as he looked at it from afar, over the unhappy lot of the sinners who dwelt

within its walls, and for their sake he endured with joy the inclemency of the seasons and the fatigues of the journey. For their sakes, too, he let the stones cut his bare feet, hoping that the blood thus shed might render fruitful the message of truth he brought.

From the moment when he took up his mission to the Albigenses in Languedoc, his life knew of no repose. In Blessed Jordan's words: "Everywhere, by words and by deeds, he showed himself an apostolic man . . . the day he gave to his neighbour, the night he gave to God." He was an apostle and nothing else than an apostle. He desired to bear the name himself, and wished to leave as a legacy to his sons the title of "Preacher," the badge of their vocation. They were not to be "Penitents," they were not to be Canons Regular who devote a portion of their time and their activity to preaching; they were to be preachers who practice a penitential life as well as the life of Canons. Their whole *raison d'être*—that which was to distinguish them from every other Order—was to be preaching; all the rest was to be subordinate to that.

From the very outset, as we have already seen, the Friars Preachers wrote at the head of their Constitutions: "Our Order has been *especially* instituted for preaching and for the salvation of souls." They would leave no room for doubt on this point, and even urged the Pope himself to acknowledge the ideal they had set before themselves. And if, under certain aspects, they still remained Canons Regular, and even bore that name, they declined to allow this feature to take precedence of the other. Finally, in spite of the novelty of the idea, they

obtained a Bull which bore witness to this feature before the whole of Christendom: "Honorius, the Bishop, Servant of the servants of God, to our dearly-beloved sons the Prior and the Brethren of Saint Romanus, *Preachers* in the country of Toulouse. . . ."

This idea serves to explain the whole of the life of the Friars, and is, indeed, the key to it. As Canons Regular, they would have had to live in a body, and close to a church, so as to insure the regularity of its services; and they could only have founded other convents when their growing numbers made this a necessity. But as apostles they dispersed at once. When they were only seventeen in number—hardly enough to form a Cathedral Chapter—Dominic yet broke them up into groups and scattered them to the four quarters of heaven. They did not wait until men came to them, they went to men, and by preference to those who had wandered the farthest from the fold. In God's Church they aspired to be conquerors rather than administrators. The advance-guard of Christ's army, they were unceasing in their activity, and kept themselves ever in touch with the enemy.

And while the Canons Regular counted among their principal occupations that of managing parishes and exercising a local ministry, the Friars Preachers avoided all such ties as were calculated to limit their scope. When approved for the first time (December 11, 1216) as Canons Regular, they were approved in accordance with the customary formula, and consequently received the right to present to the Bishop Parish Priests who were to govern the churches under their charge. But we never find them using

this right which they looked upon rather as an obstacle to their true vocation. Neither during the life-time of St. Dominic, nor under his successors, did they exercise this kind of ministry; throughout their history it has always appeared as something exceptional. And their legislation, too, is in conformity with their practice, for the Chapter of 1228 forbade them to accept churches which carried with them the care of souls.

From the same motives the Friars very soon declined to take charge of convents of nuns, though it might have been expected that the ties of fraternal charity towards their Sisters in Religion, as well as the example of their Holy Founder, would have made such work acceptable to them. Even as early as the Most General Chapter of 1228 we find an express and solemn declaration on this point: "In the name of obedience and under penalty of excommunication we formally prohibit any of the Brethren to arrange in any way for nuns, or communities of Religious women of any sort, to be committed to the care of the Order. And at the same time we forbid anyone to receive any woman to the habit or to profession." This declaration, however, did not, as Blessed Jordan explained to the Mother Prioress of St. Agnese at Bologna, refer to the Dominican Sisters. It referred to the bodies of Beguines and "Penitents" who, especially in Germany, flocked to the Friars for direction, and who thus hindered their ministry and were the cause of numberless difficulties.

In a very short time, however, the convents of Dominican Sisters increased to such an unparalleled extent, that the Order determined, in spite of the protests of the Sisters, to apply

the above rule to them as well. The result of this attempt was an extraordinary struggle which lasted for some thirty years, both sides appealing to successive Sovereign Pontiffs. But despite the resistance of the Sisters, who at times had the support of the Holy See, the Friars persisted in their view until, in the year 1252, Innocent IV. fully acknowledged the justice of the claims set forth by the Capitular Fathers assembled at Bologna. The Bull he published is of great interest. In it he sets out at length the motives which led to this decision on the part of the Fathers who realized that they were under the painful necessity of insisting on it if they would preserve intact the ideal of their Order. "The work of Evangelical Preaching," says the Bull, "by which you come to the assistance of the clergy in their labours amongst the faithful, must be the most carefully safe-guarded of all works which are undertaken for the good of souls, and no species of charitable work whatever must be allowed to interfere with it. We well know that for now many years a natural sentiment of piety has induced you to allow of communities of pious women being aggregated to your Order, and that in consequence, as thereby actual members of your own Body, they are ruled by you according to the grace which heaven has bestowed upon you. . . . But this kind of work is alien to your life, and consequently tends to hinder the aim for which you were founded, as you yourselves have clearly set forth in your petition to Us. It is an impediment to your progress in learning and in teaching, and hence serves to hinder the reformation of manners among the people . . . as well as the work of refuting the enemies of the

Faith. . . . For these reasons We have thought good to free you and your Order from all responsibilities, however meritorious such work may be, towards convents of Religious women incorporated with your Order in any way whatsoever. We except, however, the convents of Saint Sixtus at Rome and of Saint Mary at Prouille. . . ."*

To understand how well founded these complaints were, and how serious an obstacle the care of the Sisters proved to the real life of the Order, it must be remembered that a single convent of Sisters often required five or six Fathers to attend to their spiritual and temporal wants; and these Fathers thus formed a group apart who lived under the direction of a Prior or a Vicar. It was impossible, then, for the Fathers, in view of the growing number of convents, not to take energetic measures. In the year 1267, however, a compromise was effected, the Fathers agreeing to be responsible for the direction of the Sisters, but only in spiritual affairs, and even here they could, if they saw fit, appoint delegates.

This solution of the question did not do away with all difficulties, especially in countries like Germany, where there were, at the commencement of the fourteenth century, no less than ninety convents of Sisters. Still, the one aim of the Order had been carefully safeguarded, and the work of preaching had been assured its preponderating place.

These facts, as well as others, show that the first sons of St. Dominic had clearly grasped their

* *Bullarium Ordinis Praedicatorum*, vol. i., p. 217; Rome, 1729.

Father's idea. They regarded themselves as responsible to the world for the preaching of the Gospel, and we have already seen the zeal with which they undertook far distant missions. Perhaps, indeed, they were not all like the simple-minded Friar of whom we read in the *Vitae Fratrum*, that he scrupled to eat on days when he had not preached, and who, on such days, strove to satisfy his conscience by at least engaging in holy conversation with someone. But at all events they had everyone of them devoted themselves to the apostolate in its various forms. For these men all times and all auditories were an opportunity. They preached in the towns, they preached in the country. If they stayed in a strange convent, if they met with a pilgrimage or found themselves at a fair, it was all alike to them—they preached. In a book which Blessed Humbert drew up for the assistance of preachers, he furnished them with outlines for all sorts of occasions. Thus we find such titles as: Sermon before a Council, before an election, before a Parliament, before a tournament, on a market-day, before a marriage, for a funeral-feast, etc.*

He recommends the Brethren to adapt their sermons to everybody, to be careful to see what kind of audience they have, and to shape their sermon accordingly. "Some," he says, "like to listen to subtleties, others prefer a simple sermon; some like to be instructed, others prefer to have their emotions stirred."†

* *De Modo Prompte Cudendi Sermones Circa Omne Hominum et Negotiorum Genus*, in the *Maxima Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum*, vol. xxv., p. 456 and following; Lyons, 1677.

† *De Officio Praedicatoris Communis*, in the *Opera B. Humberti*, edited by Berthier, vol. ii., p. 370.

Of all the works undertaken by the Order, preaching is, according to Blessed Humbert, the most important since it is the most fruitful, and especially because it dominates all the rest—as the end dominates the means. Hence he constantly urges Superiors not to put any obstacle whatever in the way of preaching, but to help it on even at the cost of other observances. There are, he says, various abuses on this head. One is an excessive rigorousness. Some Superiors fancy that a preacher should, when outside the convent, live in the same fashion as he does inside it. Whereas, as a general rule, the preacher, if he would produce good fruit, has to lead a less strict life. If it were otherwise, preachers would soon be discouraged and give up their work. Another abuse is excess of work. Some Superiors compel their subjects to preach so incessantly that they practically have not a moment's rest; consequently they lose their strength, and their preaching has little value. A third abuse is just the opposite of this. Without any sufficient reason preachers are sometimes kept in the convent and given offices which prevent them from properly preparing themselves.*

But at the same time that the Order exhorted its sons to preach, it was very careful to see that this sublime duty was not entrusted indiscriminately to all. It demanded of the Religious who were called upon to take it up, definite guarantees of their knowledge and their virtue. Both General and Provincial Chapters frequently dwell upon this point, on which

* *Expos. super Constitutiones Fratrum Praedicatorum*, in the *Opera B. Humberti*, edited by Berthier, vol. ii., p. 33.

depended to a very great extent the good name of the Order and the profit of souls. Thus, no one was to preach unless he were at least twenty-five years of age and had the other requisite qualities. It was for the Provincial Chapter to decide this latter point, or at least the local Superior with his council. Moreover, these young preachers were not to be sent out save in particular cases. Only certain Brethren of proved theological knowledge, and of experience ripened by assiduous practice, were allowed to preach everywhere and on any occasion. These latter bore the title of "Preachers General."

Dominican preaching is essentially doctrinal and in defence of the Faith. Its aim is to set forth in their entirety the divers points of Catholic Belief, and to uphold them against the attacks of heretics. "The preacher," says Blessed Humbert, "must clearly grasp what he has got to say, for the subject-matter of his sermons is God, the angels, man, heaven, the evil one, the world, hell, the commandments, the Evangelical Counsels, the Sacraments, Holy Scripture, the virtues and vices"*—in a word, the whole of Theology, both dogmatic and moral. Moreover, he has, if need arises, to refute in a fitting manner the errors which are rife in districts hostile to the Church; he may have to do this for simple folk, he may also have to do it for people who are skilled dialecticians. His preaching is not, then, mere simple pious exhortation; such preaching may indeed move men to the love of God and the practice of the virtues set forth in the Gospel; but it does not set forth the doctrine of the

* *De Officio Praedicatoris Communis*, in the *Opera B. Humberti*, edited by Berthier, O.P., vol. ii., p. 370.

Church, and can only be described as refutation of error in so far as the very simplicity of the preacher's faith is itself a refutation of error. The Friar Preacher aims, indeed, at producing the love of God in men's souls, but by first convincing their intellects. *Veritas!* that is his motto. And this motto the Order has made its own from the very beginning, and has adhered to it through the long centuries of its life. It has made it its rallying cry and its patent of nobility.

And the Friar Preacher set forth sound doctrine in all its aspects. One day he would speak to simple folk in language understood of them; on another he would dispute with heretics who were learned men, and with such he would hold long conferences wherein learning and dialectical skill would find fitting place.

Hence a Friar Preacher who is destined to devote himself to preaching in all its varied forms will need a very sound theological training. For him a knowledge of the simple elements of Catholic doctrine will not suffice; he must possess the art of setting it forth in scientific fashion, of showing how it is based on revealed truth, and how it has flowed without deviation from the twin sources, Scripture and Tradition. And more than this: he must clearly grasp, and must be able to explain, how this doctrine accords with human reason, and is not in conflict with self-evident truths. And lastly, he must be in a position to demonstrate the weakness of the objections that may be urged, and to set before men the supreme though mysterious riches contained in Catholic doctrine. Without this there is no such thing as true and solid defence of the Faith.

This ideal, as one can easily see, means that Dominican life must be built up on really deep theological studies. We shall see further on how the Order grasped this need, and how it took practical steps to secure it.

And this ideal of preaching will serve to explain how preaching and teaching were regarded as but two different aspects of one and the same truth, and how, in consequence, the Order from the commencement attached an equal importance to them both.

The work of teaching goes back to St. Dominic himself. For the conferences he held with the chiefs of the Albigenses were but theological disputations after the manner of the school of his day. They sometimes lasted a whole week, as at Servian and Béziers, and each side strove by means of arguments from authority and from reason to show the weak points of his adversary and the soundness of his own view.

Sometimes, too, mere verbal discussion was felt to be insufficient, and in order to set the subject under discussion in a clearer light—in order, too, to eliminate anything that in the heat of discussion might not have been stated clearly and precisely—the umpires in these debates insisted that each party should commit their opinions to writing. This certainly happened at least twice in St. Dominic's life. "One day," Blessed Humbert tells us, "a famous disputation took place at Fanjeaux. An immense crowd of believers and of heretics had gathered. Several of the Catholics had drawn up written statements of arguments from reason and authority in support of the Catholic Faith. Upon examination, that drawn

up by St. Dominic was adjudged the most solid, and met with the approbation of all. It was then decided to submit this written statement to three judges chosen by the two parties, so that they might compare it with the statement drawn up by the heretics. All agreed to accept as the truth the doctrine contained in the statement which these judges should pronounce the best. But when, after lengthy discussion, these same judges could not arrive at any decision, it was decided to submit the two writings to the ordeal by fire: if one of them remained untouched by the fire, it would undoubtedly contain the true faith. A fire was then lit, and the two writings thrown into it. The writing composed by the heretics was at once consumed, but that composed by the Blessed Dominic was not merely preserved intact, but was, in the presence of all, thrown out from the fire to a distance. Three successive attempts were made to burn it, but on each occasion it was rejected by the flames. Thus was shown the truth of the doctrine which it contained, and the sanctity of him who composed it."*

On another occasion, at Montréal, a similar scene was enacted privately with a written treatise sent by St. Dominic to a heretic whom he was trying to convert.

These theological jousts, in which men's faith was the stake, long held a traditional place in the Order. Thus, to give but one instance, Roland of Cremona played the part of a redoubtable champion in a disputation which took place under memorable circumstances. "One day, when he was at Cremona, some of the

* *De Initiis Ordinis*, in the *Opera B. Humberti*, edited by Berthier, O.P., p. 10; Fribourg, 1891.

Brethren came from the camp of Frederic, who was then besieging Brescia (1238), and told Roland that a philosopher in the Emperor's train had put to them difficulties which, to their disgust, they had been unable to answer. Filled with zeal for the honour of the Order, the aged Master exclaimed: 'Saddle me an ass at once!' For he was quite crippled and unable to walk. They saddled the ass, and presently Roland arrived, seated on his beast, in the Emperor's camp. He at once made inquiries for the philosopher. Meanwhile many of the nobles who knew and esteemed him came round him. When the philosopher appeared on the scene, Roland said to him: 'So that you may understand, Master Theodore, that there are philosophers in the Order of Friars Preachers, I will give you choice of either putting to me difficulties on any philosophical point you like, or of answering those I shall put to you.' Theodore preferred to put difficulties, and in the disputation which followed Roland gained such a victory over him as redounded to the glory and reputation of the Order."

Nor did St. Dominic merely hold learned conferences; he actually taught. John of Colonna tells us that, "During his stay in Rome, the Founder of the Order of Preachers expounded St. Paul in the public lecture-halls. The students thronged to hear him, and amongst his audience could be seen several Prelates of the Church."*

Hence it is not astonishing that even during the Saint's life-time the Brethren, in addition to their preaching, gave theological instruction

* *De Viris Illustribus, Dominicus*, in Mamachi, *Annales Ordinis Praedicatorum*, vol. i., Appendix, c. 362; Rome, 1756.

to the novices, and even to students from outside. Indeed, their whole life, the very special formation they had received, and the doctrinal character of their preaching, all combined to this end. But, more than all, the needs of the clergy and the scant number of competent professors in the dioceses, induced the Bishops to demand the assistance of the Friars in founding the Theological schools insisted on by the Lateran Council. For the Friars were a body of learned men who were bound by no ties to any particular place, but were ready to go to the ends of the world if the needs of souls called for them, and by this very fact they were clearly marked out as teachers. In accordance with this they were more than once, as we have pointed out above, called upon "to preach *and to teach*." These early tendencies were naturally strengthened when the Friars came to hold University Chairs, and were accounted amongst the most renowned Masters of the time.

St. Thomas speaks freely of this rôle played by his Order, and he claims for it freedom to teach as its right and its honour. According to him, the occupation of teaching corresponds completely with the idea which gave birth to the Dominican Order—the salvation of souls and the defence of Catholic truth.*

It would be an unwarrantable impertinence for anyone to say that St. Thomas made a mistake when he said that teaching was one of the essential objects of the Order. On the contrary, we know that the early history of the Order, as well as that of St. Dominic, amply justifies his words. Besides, it would be vain

* *Contra Impugnantes Religionem*, c. ii.

to seek any official protest against the Saint's views on this point.

A striking proof, too, of the soundness of St. Thomas's views on the subject is afforded by the pre-eminence ever accorded in the Order to the Masters of Sacred Theology, and this, too, from the very commencement. They form an essential part of the organic body, and on them all the rest depends, as is categorically stated by Blessed Humbert: "It is much more necessary," he says, "to provide lectors than preachers, for lectors make preachers, not conversely. Hence, if there is a lack of lectors, there will be a corresponding lack of preachers."*

Preaching and teaching, then, far from being opposed, mutually complete one another, and mutually work for the fulfilment of the Dominican ideal—the salvation of souls. The preacher pre-supposes the lector as the basis of his own formation; but the lector, by the particular form which his activity takes—namely, by his oral teaching and by the works he composes, reaches an audience which would otherwise remain beyond the scope of the apostolic zeal of the Order.

* "Magis enim necesse est providere ne desint lectores quam praedicatores, quoniam lectores faciunt praedicatores, et non e converso. Unde deficientibus lectoribus, deficient praedicatores."—*Expositio super Constitutiones Fratrum Praedicatorum. Opera B. Humberti*, edited by Berthier, O.P., vol. ii., p. 34.

CHAPTER IV

THE MEANS TO THE END

Study

IF we clearly understand the end which the Friars Preachers set before them, we shall see at once that study must necessarily occupy the foremost place among the means employed for its attainment. To spread abroad Catholic Truth, to put it at the disposal of all, and in the form which shall best appeal to them; to preach, to discuss, to teach, and that not merely as an occasional thing, but as the occupation of one's life and in systematic fashion—all this necessarily demands a serious and methodical intellectual formation. For a Dominican, then, study is not something accessory, nor something more or less necessary; it is an essential element.

The cloister had produced many learned men previous to the thirteenth century, and study had never been completely banished from the monasteries, and this even in spite of certain exaggerated mystics who mistrusted all knowledge and only saw in it a dangerous foe. It is nowadays an accepted commonplace that the monks of old, Benedictines and others, contributed immensely to literary culture, and no one now thinks of questioning the rôle played by the monastic schools of the Middle Ages.

The Canons Regular, too, had found themselves obliged to accord a prominent place in their life to the intellectual element. Their ministerial work compelled them to possess at least a minimum of knowledge, for without that they would have been unworthy of their vocation and culpable before God, as well as responsible for the loss of souls. Hence in the twelfth century we find them possessing famous schools at St. Victor's in Paris, and also in other places. Their Constitutions, in several Abbeys at least, prescribe study, and insist on the presence in the Abbey of some qualified master who is to instruct the younger members and assist in the work of their mental formation. This was doubtless a great step, and the Friars Preachers in attaching themselves to the family of Canons, must at least have had similar rules.

But the Friars, impelled by the particular kind of ministry they had adopted, went very much farther. Religious men before them had, of course, studied, but the Dominicans were the first to devote themselves expressly to close study, and to organize it thoroughly in their Constitutions. This novelty struck observant minds even in the thirteenth century. Thus Blessed Humbert, whose clear perceptions were rarely at fault, refers to it on more than one occasion. "The Order of Preachers," he says, "was the first to join study to the Religious life."* An examination of the Constitutions brings out this truth clearly, especially when we compare them with those of Prémontré, on which they were principally based. For as

* H. Denifle, O.P., *Die Constitutionen des Prediger-Ordens von Jahre*, 1228; in the *Archiv für Literatur und Kirchengeschichte*, vol. i., 1885, p. 187.

regards study, the two sets of Constitutions have nothing in common; here the entire legislation of the Friars Preachers is their own. Up to their time manual labour had been jealously preserved in all the Orders, even among the Canons, as being a traditional element in the Religious life, a heritage from the Fathers of the desert and from St. Benedict. "True monks," said the latter, "earn their bread by the labour of their hands." St. Francis of Assisi practised it himself, and made it an obligatory part of his Rule. Among the Friars Preachers, on the contrary, it disappeared entirely. St. Dominic wished "his sons to be entirely free from all material anxiety, to the end that they might be unceasingly applied to study, prayer, and preaching."* He even pushed this principle so far as to have, at one time, contemplated leaving all temporal administration in the hands of the lay-brethren.

At any rate, it was the wish of St. Dominic—and the primitive Constitutions emphasize his wish—that the students should never be disturbed in their work by having other offices to discharge. More than once, both General and Provincial Chapters earnestly beg Priors and Visitators to pay special attention to this rule. In 1250 a certain Prior in Dacia was removed from his office, and received a severe penance because he had, though only indirectly, hindered the studies in his convent. He had, as a matter of fact, pulled down the existing lecture-halls, which were quite sufficient for their needs, and

* *Dicta Testium super Inquisitione Facta de Vita, Obitu, et Miraculis B. Dominici*, Testis IV., Frater Radulphus, in Quetif-Echard, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum*, vol. i., p. 52.

had built new ones, thus interrupting the studies for some time.

Dominican life as a whole, then, had to be so organized as not to interrupt the studies. And the Prior had to be on his guard lest the observance of the Rule should fatigue the students, and thus diminish their zeal. From time to time, in order to keep up their strength, he was to allow them dispensations, especially with regard to the night Office and the fast. It was considered wise, too, even to dispense them at times from the abstinence; and the more closely occupied they were with study the more generous these dispensations were to be. In order to facilitate study, cells distinct from the common dormitory were to be allotted to the lectors and students.

And even for the whole community the Rule was, in its general conception, adapted to the requirements of study. The Constitutions recommend that the Divine Office be recited "briskly and without dragging," and this, "in order not to disturb the studies." With the same end in view, it is enacted that the daily Chapter may be omitted on certain days.

From all this it is clear that study is one of the fundamental obligations of Dominican life. Other observances may be relaxed for a time in its favour; it itself admits of no dispensation. And this is a truth which the novice-Master is to impress very earnestly on the minds of the young men whom he has to form. "It is his duty," say the Constitutions, "to make them realize that they have to apply themselves seriously to study, that they are under obligation to read, and reflect day and night on what they have read, and that they have to endeavour

to commit to memory as much as they can." The tone of insistence which we note here, as well as the energetic terms used, show clearly the importance which the Order attached to this point.

It would be a mistake, too, to suppose that this obligation only concerned the young. It was universal in its application. All, whosoever they might be, were bound to apply themselves unceasingly to study. Thus no convent, for instance, was to be erected unless it could provide a lector. And in case it were impossible to establish a course of higher Theology, a lector was at least to comment on the *Historia Scolastica* of Peter Comestor, and all the Religious in the convent, not excepting the Prior—unless his duties were such as to preclude him from being present—were bound to attend these lectures. If, through his own fault and without permission, one of the Religious failed to be present at the daily lecture, the General Chapter held in 1305 enacted that he should for that day go without his wine and one dish at table. A Provincial Chapter held at Toulouse in 1336 dispensed, though with regret, those Religious who had spent fifty years in Religion from the duty of attending these lectures.*

On this point the early history of the Order is in full conformity with this legislation, and it shows us how it was carried out. From the commencement, and under St. Dominic's own influence, the Brethren were set to study, and this far more than in any Order that had pre-

* These details are taken from the Constitutions and the Acts of the General and Provincial Chapters; *cf.* Douais, *Essai sur l'Organisation des Études dans l'Ordre des Frères Prêcheurs*. Paris-Toulouse, 1884.

viously existed. Hardly were they established at Toulouse, when they began to frequent the theological schools existing in the town. Blessed Humbert vouches for the following, which he had from Brother Arnulf de Bethune, who had himself heard it, when in England, from the old Toulouse Professor, Alexander Stavensby. "There was," he says, "a Master illustrious by birth, knowledge, and fame, who taught Theology at Toulouse. One morning, before daybreak, while preparing his class, feeling overcome with sleep, he rested his head awhile on his hands and slept. And it seemed to him as though seven stars were set before him. And while he looked with amazement at this prodigy, these stars all of a sudden grew in splendour and in magnitude, till they lighted up the whole district, and finally the entire world. Then he awoke, and seeing that it was day, he summoned his servant to carry his books, and so entered the class-room. And then, lo! there entered the Blessed Dominic and his companions, all wearing the same habit, and they approached in all humility towards the Master. They told him that they were Friars preaching the Gospel of the Lord to the faithful and refuting errors; they added that they had come to the Master's class, since they were eager to profit by his teaching. And for a long time they were the Master's familiar disciples and friends, and he—recalling his vision—recognized in those same stars Dominic and his companions, who were soon to shine throughout the world by their fame and their knowledge."*

* *Vita S. Dominici*, n. 32, in Mamachi, *Annales O.P.*, Appendix C, 283.

When St. Dominic dispersed his first companions, he sent them to the two great University towns of Europe—Paris and Bologna. Undoubtedly they went there to preach and to draw students to the budding Order; but they also went there to study. John of Navarre says so expressly. At Paris they established themselves at first near to Notre-Dame, so that they might the more easily follow the Lectures of the Masters there. One of these taught them Theology for the space of several years; while in their own tiny convent, Matthew of France, and afterwards Jordan of Saxony, assisted in the scientific formation of the other Brethren. And soon their reputation for knowledge was such that they themselves were able to replace, at a crisis, the Masters who had left the town. It was thus they inaugurated a teaching which was to prove their glory throughout the centuries.

It would occupy us too long to attempt to follow out this development here, and to show how every convent, even in the smallest towns, became a centre of study and of intellectual life. The growing tendency towards the specialization of these studies shows us what progress they made. In one place they taught Philosophy, in another Holy Scripture, elsewhere Theology. Some convents were especially set aside for the study of Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic. An ascending order can be traced in these schools, from the practical course given in the smaller convents, to the Houses of General Study at Paris, Bologna, Oxford, Cologne, and Montpellier; the *studia artium*, *studia naturalium*, and *studia solemnia*.

Some mention, too, must be made of the principal scientific works to which the Dominicans gave their attention during the thirteenth century. "When the task of revising the textbooks in use in the different Faculties of the University was undertaken, the correction of the text of the Bible, the official textbook of the Faculty of Theology, as well as the codification of the *Corpus Juris*, the textbook of the Law schools, was carried out—if, indeed, it was not officially committed to them—by the Dominicans. The name of Hugh de Saint-Cher will ever remain associated with the former of these undertakings; that of St. Raymund of Pennafort with the latter. The revision of the text of Aristotle was the only work definitely entrusted to other hands than theirs, for we have no indication that anything of the same kind was undertaken for the schools of medicine and Civil Law which were more particularly in the hands of the civil authorities. But by a coincidence which at first sight seems strange, the Dominicans themselves were to prove the great revisers of the text of Aristotle. For while the savants who had been officially appointed to this task either shrank from its many difficulties or left the work half done, the Dominicans took it up of their own accord, and brought it to so successful a conclusion that their revision of the existing text of Aristotle surpassed in renown their correction of the Bible text, and their Codification of the Canon Law."* And to these undertakings we must add the numberless translations of Greek texts,

* P. Mandonnet, O.P., *Siger de Brabant*, pp. 30-31; Louvain, 1911.

a work which proved of great use to philosophers.

But however energetic this intellectual movement among the Friars Preachers proved, the Order was ever careful to assign to it its proper place, and to preserve intact its true character. Study was not to be a mere pastime, but something which was to prove useful for the apostolic work of the Friars. It was not an end in itself, and the Fathers were not to be mere dilettanti: study was to be essentially a means for winning souls. The Constitutions say so in express terms: "Our studies must principally tend, and that with an ardent zeal, towards assisting our neighbours' souls." And Blessed Humbert's commentary on this is still more precise: "It is necessary to remark that study is not the end of the Order; but at the same time it is of supreme importance as being the means by which the Order reaches the end it has ever in view: preaching, namely, and the salvation of souls. Without study we should be prepared for neither the one nor the other."

Study, then, in the Order of Friars Preachers, has a definite practical purpose. This does not of course, mean that knowledge as such has to yield to practice, but simply that we must use scientific study with a view to the salvation of souls, and that we must keep our studies within the bounds marked out by this end. Now there is one science which is pre-eminently conducive to the salvation of souls, and that is Theology. Consequently all our studies must converge towards that. And this the early Constitutions clearly indicate: "The Brethren

are not to study the works of the heathen philosophers, though they may indeed glance at them from time to time. Similarly, they must not devote themselves to the study of the secular sciences, nor of the so-called liberal arts, unless, of course, the Master-General or the Chapter grant certain dispensations in this matter; all, both young and old, must simply read theological works." By "theological works" were especially meant the Bible with the Gloss, the Sentences, and Ecclesiastical History; all these three were to be in the hands of every student. And these rules were quite in keeping with those generally laid down by the Church, and in force among the whole clergy at the time.

The dispensation mentioned above was soon, however, to be largely applied by the Masters-General. For they realized that it was impossible to make a scientific study of Theology as it was then understood without an adequate knowledge of dialectics and of the other branches of philosophical study. By the middle of the thirteenth century the study of the liberal arts was not confined to individuals nor by any means exceptional. The Provincial Chapters set to work to organize it. And Humbert de Romans, the Fifth Master-General, showed himself very broad in practice, though with certain necessary reservations and distinctions. To the question, Is it expedient for the Brethren to study the works of the Philosophers? he replied: "Some are incapable of profiting by such study; others may perhaps reap some advantage from it; but others more gifted will make rapid advance in such study, and will derive from it great advantages for the study of

Holy Scripture. Consequently, the first-named must not be allowed to read these works; those in the second category may study them sometimes, but discreetly and not as a regular thing; but the third class may have full liberty (*laxandae sunt habenae circa studentes hujusmodi*). To give the same liberty to all indiscriminately would be a mistake, to refuse it to all alike would be a snare of the evil one."*

And St. Thomas who, by his own example and by his lectures, so fully justified a study of the works of the heathen Philosophers, has furnished us with the true principle which must govern us in this matter. While fully maintaining the principle laid down by the Order from the first, he clearly sets forth the precise position of Philosophy with regard to sacred science: "Religious, whose whole lives are consecrated to the service of God, cannot apply themselves to the study of other sciences except in so far as they are conducive to a greater knowledge of Theology."† These other sciences are, according to the celebrated formula, the "handmaidens of Theology," and in this capacity the queen of sciences has them ever about her court, where they may render her good service.

"This attraction on the part of a large portion of the Order, the portion, too, which was the most fitted for the intellectual life and

* *Expositio Regulae B. Augustini*, in the *Works of Bl. Humbert*, edited by P. Berthier, O.P., vol. i., p. 435.

† *Summa Theol.*, IIa., IIae., Q. CLXXXVIII., Art. V. *ad* 3m: "Aliis autem doctrinis intendere non pertinet ad religiosos, quorum tota vita divinis obsequiis mancipetur, nisi in quantum ordinantur ad sacram doctrinam."

for progress, was not allowed to pass without opposition. . . . Not merely did it meet with bitter criticism from without, but even within the Order there was much opposition to it, and we can still discover manifest traces of this. The curious work known as the *Vitae Fratrum*, which was published in 1266, and which shows us in many of its features the ascetic tendencies of the early Dominicans, does not fail to single out for condemnation certain Religious who gave themselves up to an exaggerated study of Philosophy,* and it contrasts the pious lives led by the early Brethren with the love of study displayed by some of their contemporaries. . . .† Albert the Great, one of the prime movers in this study of the profane writers, experienced this opposition more than anybody. He told his companion, the good Thomas of Cantimpre, who seems, indeed, to have failed to grasp the real meaning of the Master's remark, that when he was at Paris the devil appeared to him in the guise of one of the Brethren, and endeavoured to dissuade him from devoting himself to study.‡ This event must be referred to the period between 1245 and 1248, when Albert was teaching at the University of Paris, and just when he was commencing the publication of his encyclopædia of science. And after saying this, Albert, deeply affected, perhaps, by the resistance with

* *Vitae Fratrum*, edited by Reichert, O.P., p. 208.

† "Non statim currebant ad quaternos volvendos. . . . Post matutinas autem pauci currebant ad libros."—*Op. cit.*, p. 212.

‡ "Albertus Theologus, frater Ordinis Praedicatorum narravit mihi, quod Parisiis illi daemon in specie cujusdam fratris apparuit ut eum a studio revocaret."—Th. Cantipratanus, *Bonum Universale de Apibus*, Lib. II., cap. lvii., num. 34, p. 563; Douay, 1627.

which the Order was meeting, let fall a remark which, coming from one who was usually so serene and forgetful of self, clearly showed how impatient he felt of an opposition which was so senseless and so wanting in perception:* "There are people," he said, "who know nothing, and who yet strive in every possible fashion to prevent the study of Philosophy, and this especially by the Friars Preachers, among whom they find no one to oppose them: 'irrational beasts . . . blaspheming those things which they know not' (2 Pet. ii., 12)."†

At first such people were content to blame the study of Philosophy, but before long they went on to discountenance all knowledge, even theological. And certain visionaries went so far as to say that since, in the presence of the mysterious, Theology was powerless, it would be better to rest content with a pious simplicity.‡

But anonymous protests such as these could avail little when the Constitutions were against them, and when men like St. Thomas and Blessed Humbert were stating in clear terms what was the true tradition of the Order.

St. Thomas dwells at length on the merits of study; and even if we had not his positive teaching, his whole life, the sanctity of which has ever been acknowledged by the Order and the Church, would be a standing protest against

* "Quidam qui nesciunt, omnibus modis volunt impugnare usum philosophiae, et maxime in Praedicatoribus, ubi nullus eis resistit, tanquam bruta animalia blasphemantes in eis quae ignorant."—*In Epistolas B. Dionysii Areopagitæ*, Ep. viii., *n.* 2.

† *Siger de Brabant*, pp. 34-36.

‡ *Vitae Fratum*, edited by Reichert, p. 209.

any such views as those above mentioned. Study, the Saint declares, is the duty of a Religious for three reasons. In the first place, it is an aid to contemplation. For since this latter consists in dwelling upon the things of God, study serves as a guide to us, and is a corrective of certain dangers which may easily arise. Men who are ignorant of Theology often fall into errors regarding the true nature of contemplation. This was the case with the Abbot Serapion mentioned in the *Conferences of the Fathers*. By reason of his simplicity he fell into the error of the Anthropomorphites, who attributed to God a human form. And, secondly, study is necessary for those Religious who are to devote themselves to the work of preaching. And let no one urge here the case of the Apostles who were sent forth on their mission without previous study; for, as St. Jerome points out in his Letter to Paulinus, that, which with others, is the result of toil and of meditation on the Holy Scriptures, was vouchsafed to the Apostles by the gift of the Holy Spirit. And lastly, study has its advantages even for the Religious simply as such. St. Jerome says to the monk Rusticus: "Love the knowledge of the Scriptures, and you will not love the vices of the flesh." For study wards off from the soul all fleshly thoughts, and the toil of study is a real mortification of the body. The desire of riches, too, finds no place in the heart of a man who is addicted to study, and it is an aid to obedience.*

And Humbert, too, the fifth General of the

* *Summa Theol.*, IIa. IIae, Q. CLXXXVIII. Art. V.

Order, an eminent preacher, a wise and most experienced administrator, enumerates at length the advantages which the Order may gain from even purely philosophical study. He says in brief: "Philosophy helps to defend the faith; for how can a man preserve himself from the seductions of false doctrine and refute those who hold it, unless he knows his Philosophy?" To Humbert's mind ignorance was no guarantee of the faith, but rather clear and solid knowledge. And he acutely remarks: "Many are inclined, before they have studied the works of the Philosophers for themselves, to attribute to them a greater value than they really have; but when they get acquainted with their works, they do not find them so very wonderful, especially in comparison with Theology. And the study of Sacred Scripture will profit from the study of Philosophy, for this latter sharpens the wits and provides us with many a useful argument."

The entire Order, too, he continues, will gain from these studies. For we often notice that in the actual work of the ministry learned men are more appreciated than ignorant men. And this is easy to understand, for "simplicity, even when accompanied with sanctity, is only of profit to the man himself; whereas knowledge combined with virtue is useful not only to its possessor, but to others as well."* Study will also help to bring recruits to the Order. "Certain notable persons would never have entered

* "Sancta enim simplicitas solum sibi prodest; sed docta justitia non solum sibi, sed etiam aliis." *Expositio super Constitutiones*, edited by P. Berthier, O.P., vol. ii., p. 29.

the Order if the studies had not been held in honour amongst us, for these men were in love with study. Without it, too, others who entered incompletely formed, would never have made the progress they afterwards showed." And then, lastly, how many evils, how many temptations, are avoided by means of study? One day fatigue comes, and with it, perhaps, ennui and discouragement as well. It is then that study comes as a help and a source of strength; it brings rest and consolation to the soul in trouble, and fills it with the zeal needful for the undertaking of fresh toils.*

If, then, study is so important, "we must," as Blessed Humbert declares, "avoid receiving into the Order novices who are insufficiently educated. If we do so, nothing but trouble can ensue. Such Religious, after a short time, get discouraged when they see that they cannot do what others do; and if, from necessity, they are given apostolic work, then the souls of whom they have the care are endangered. And what is more, through such men the Order itself falls into discredit, and men worth having will not enter it."†

But in order to study, one must have the wherewithal. The needs of intellectual work demand a supply of books.

* "Litterae enim sunt quasi quaedam refectio confortans animam. Confortata vero anima potentior est ad lalores. . . . Aliud (bonum studii) est allevatio taedii quod incurrunt multi religiosi. Sunt enim Scripturae solatia et consolationes animae studenti." —*Expositio super Constitutiones*, in the *Opera B. Humberti*, edited by Berthier, vol. ii., p. 29. *Cf. Expositio Regulae B. Augustini, ibid.*, vol. i., pp. 436-439.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i., pp. 472-473.

There is hardly any point which recurs with greater frequency than this in the *Acta* of General or Provincial Chapters. "Since our weapons are our books," says one of these Chapters, "and since, without books, no one can safely be set to preach or hear confessions, we admonish the Priors of convents, as well as others, to take pains to enrich the common library." Over and over again, and that, too, from the commencement of the Order, we find the purchase of books recommended. "There are Religious," says Humbert, "who take a great deal of pains to set up a fountain and spend a great deal of money on it. They insist upon having water to drink, and water for the garden, as also for the divers needs of the house; but they forget the fountain of Divine Wisdom Who cleanses the filth from our souls, Who refreshes our hearts and renders them fruitful in good works, and so produces a crowd of good results. In other words, they never think of buying books!"* Others, again, "good and pious souls withal, seem to be far more occupied with the wood and stones which go to build our material edifices, than of the books which are useful to souls."†

In the thirteenth century there was another means of acquiring books besides buying them; the Friars copied them from other manuscripts. But the Brethren were not to devote themselves to this task except in so far as the Prior or the Master of the students should think fit. In no case were they to prefer this occupation to the essential work of Dominican life. Hence it was generally thought preferable to have such copy-

* *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 420. † *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 423.

ing done outside the convent, or if within its walls, at least by professional copyists. In this latter case the copyists were under the direction of one of the Brethren. It was his duty to watch and see that they did their work carefully, and were not an occasion of disturbance to the community.

In addition to the books which were common property, the Religious had a right to have books for their own personal use. "The Friars Preachers," says Blessed Humbert, "are bound more than other Religious to devote themselves to study. Consequently, our first Fathers, by choosing the Rule of St. Augustine, allowed a great deal of latitude as regards intellectual work; thus, in addition to a common library, they allowed each Religious to have books for his own personal use."* And they considered books so necessary that, in spite of very strict observance of poverty in other things, they permitted the Religious to keep money for the purpose of buying books (*cf.* the General Chapter held at Florence in 1254). These books were *theirs* as long as they lived (*libros suos*), and they followed the Brethren about according as obedience found them dwelling now in one convent now in another. Only on the death of a religious could the Provincial or the Prior dispose of the latter's books, and this according to rules rigorously fixed by successive Chapters.

But at the same time it is worth remarking that since the Friar Preacher's books were his weapons, they had perforce to be simple and

* *Expositio Regulae B. Augustini*, in the *Opera B. Humberti*, edited by Berthier, vol. i., p. 476.

solid. Nothing useless, nothing luxurious, was allowed. A Dominican is a man of learning, but he is not a bibliomaniac. He has no need of specimens of caligraphy, nor of precious bindings; what he needs is correct and legible texts.* Thus the General Chapter of Bologna in 1240 took away from a Friar a Bible which was too richly bound, and gave him a severe penance for having it.

With these provisos a Friar Preacher could devote himself to study, and was bound to do so; for this study formed one of the chief elements in his preparation for the apostolate. But it was not the only one.

* *Expositio Regulae B. Augustini*, in the *Opera B. Humberti*, edited by Berthier, O.P., vol. i., p. 448.

CHAPTER V

THE MEANS TO THE END—*Continued*

Religious Observances—Prayer

WHILE insisting so strongly on study, Blessed Humbert is no less insistent on the necessity of Prayer and other religious observances. "The love of knowledge," he says, "must not make us neglect what concerns our religious life. There are some who, when the signal is given calling us to church or to chapter, think less of obedience than of their zeal for study. But against such tendencies we have the example of the monk Mark, who at the call of his Superior left unfinished a single letter he was just forming. Really holy men ever strive to keep their piety alive by prayer and private devotions, by celebrating Mass, by frequent confession, by assisting at the Divine Office, and especially by reciting the Office of the Blessed Virgin. But there are, alas! others who sometimes neglect these exercises in order to give themselves more earnestly to study. Such study undoubtedly enables them to understand Divine things, but they do not really appreciate them. They are like the miser who is content to gaze at the treasures he has heaped up, but has lost the power to use them."

"True Religious," he goes on to say, "are ever ready to assist one another, and, according to St. Augustine's precept, do so 'before all things.' Others, on the contrary, put study before charity, and in so doing they go against the Apostle's precept. For Religion consists wholly in these things: obedience to Superiors, who stand to us in the place of God, a certain holy preoccupation regarding one's soul, and the service of one's neighbour. Consequently, he who neglects these things for the sake of study is no longer a Religious."

While speaking on this subject, Blessed Humbert, putting the matter in its extremest form, declares that, on the hypothesis that we had to choose between virtue and knowledge, our choice would necessarily have to fall on the former, for it is by that, and not by knowledge, that we are saved." "Surgunt indocti et rapiunt cœlum, et nos cum litteris nostris in infernum demergimur" (St. Augustine).*

But in the Order of Friars Preachers virtue and knowledge cannot be separated; still less, then, can they be set in opposition to one another. Both are necessary, and the one completes the other. "Which is best," asked a Religious of Blessed Humbert, "to give oneself up to a life of prayer, or to devote oneself to study?" And the Master replies with vehemence: "Which is best: always to eat or always to drink? Clearly it is best to do both alternately. And this is the answer to your question!"†

As a matter of fact—and it is a point which

* *Expositio Regulae*, vol. iii., pp. 439-445.
† *Vitae Fratrum*, edited by Reichert, p. 146.

we must never forget—Dominican life, considered as a whole, consists in a contemplation which is essentially active. It is not an art which we practise according to any technical rules, nor is it any scientific teaching which proceeds from the intellect alone; it is rather a contemplation which, by reason of its very fulness finds its outlet in external action. Its supreme object—I had almost said its only object—is the salvation of souls, a work which is wholly supernatural. And from this twofold point of view—that, namely, of contemplative work and of apostolic work—the Dominican ideal demands something besides study, however essential this latter may be; or, rather, it demands that study should be inspired by supernatural principles, should derive its life from contact with them, and should further draw from them that fruitfulness which will cause it to bud forth in works which make for salvation.

We should have a very false idea of religious contemplation were we to reduce it to a simple knowledge of the truth, even were it combined with a certain selfish delight in this intellectual treasure. For even the heathen dreamed of something like this, and sometimes attained to it. Indeed, any man who is conscious of aspirations after something superior to the mere pleasures of sense, and who has a soul above the fleeting honours of this world, is instinctively impelled to wrap himself up in that atmosphere of calm tranquillity which a philosophical view of life begets. But knowledge such as this rarely serves to govern a man's life, and still more rarely does it constrain a man to expend himself on others. Such knowledge is, in Scriptural parlance, "puffed up," for it is

filled with pride. It produces egotists, not Apostles.

Christian contemplation, and above all religious contemplation, bases itself on charity in order that it may arrive at charity.* Because it loves God it aims at knowing God in Himself, in His infinite perfections, in those "relations" which constitute, so to speak, His inner life; in His relations, too, with the Universe He has created. True contemplation, then, yearns to lay hold, with all its powers, with the entirety of its being, as far as this is possible, of That Which is the super-eminent Truth and the super-eminent Good. Love stirs the intellect, and the latter, in its turn, furnishes ever new motives for love. And when the soul is entirely absorbed by this supreme Good Which has taken it captive, it, while yet giving to It its fullest powers, yearns to make others too, partakers in what it feels. Quite naturally, it proclaims the glory of Him Who has conquered it; quite naturally, too, it strives to win for Him others who may know Him, others who may love Him: in a word, it has become an apostle.

It is easy to see that study alone would never bring men to this. It may, indeed, by its argu-

* St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* IIa. IIae.; Q. CLXXX. Art. VII. *ad* 1m: "Ad primum ergo dicendum, quod vita contemplativa, licet essentialiter consistat in intellectu, principium tamen habet in affectu; in quantum videlicet aliquis ex charitate ad Dei contemplationem incitatur. Et quia finis respondet principio, inde est, quod etiam terminus et finis contemplativae vitae habet esse in affectu; dum scilicet aliquis in visione rei amatae delectatur, et ipsa delectatio rei visae amplius excitat amorem. . . . Et haec est ultima perfectio contemplativae vitae, ut scilicet non solum divina veritas videatur, sed etiam ut ametur."

ments—nay, even by its intuitions—serve to disclose to the gaze a Being superior to all others, a Supreme Cause, an irresistible Power, a Goodness without peer; it can produce a sublime ideal, but never Something Living, Something we can touch and feel, Some One with Whom we can converse, and of Whom we have a certain experimental knowledge. For all this we need Charity, or Love.

Knowledge, the outcome of our studies, can indeed sketch out this Ideal in precise fashion; it can preserve us, too, from the errors into which an unillumined love might lead us; it can give us a facility in speaking of this Ideal in human terms of great precision and clearness; and all this is good, and indeed needful, for such as would live according to this Ideal, and teach others to do the same; but to make this Ideal an actually Living Thing, Charity, Divine Love, must breathe the breath of life into the shadowy outline.

The beginning and the end, then, of this task is Charity, and Charity, we know, is a pure gift of God. None but He can communicate it to us, for it is in some sort a communication of His Divine Nature, and no one has any right to that. He places this charity, then, in our hearts by His grace, and this treasure is in fragile vessels which may easily allow it to escape. Hence our real work is to cherish it, to preserve it, and to develop it, if possible, by affording to it an ever larger place in our lives. And for the attainment of this end there are, as has already been said, certain means which in their aggregate constitute Christian and Religious asceticism—namely, penitential exercises and prayer.

This, then, is the relationship which holds good in all Dominican life between study and

these two other means—namely, penitential exercises and prayer: their task is to develop and to preserve that charity which is to give life to our studies. Neither prayer nor penance can be a substitute for study, and study without them remains a body without a head. We understand, then, why St. Dominic, with his keen sense of supernatural realities, sought to weld these elements together in his Constitutions. He himself, faithful to his ideal, ever practised them in concert, and his most illustrious sons have ever done, according to their measure, as did their Father.

The penitential exercises of the Order may be grouped under three heads: watching, fasting, and abstinence.

Under the first head comes the obligation of breaking our sleep in order to recite Matins at midnight. The Constitutions are not clear as to the hour at which Matins were said in the thirteenth century. It is evident that our first Fathers adhered to the custom then prevailing in Collegiate churches, so that it was sufficient to set down "Matins shall be recited" for everyone to understand what was meant. And a study of Blessed Humbert's commentaries shows that there was no uniform practice as regarded the hour at which Matins were said; that it fluctuated even in the same convent. It varied according to the season of the year, according to the accepted method of computing time, and according to local custom. The expression "about midnight" was understood in a very broad sense, and might differ by several hours.*

* *Cf.* P. Mortier, O.P., *Histoire des Maîtres Généraux de l'Ordre des Frères Prêcheurs*, vol. i., pp. 581-582; Paris, 1903.

In addition to this obligatory "watching," many fervent Religious added other vigils out of devotion, desirous of imitating, at least in a measure, their Father St. Dominic. For he, as a matter of fact, passed the greater portion of the night in prayer. "He was in the habit," says Blessed Jordan, "of watching in the church, and that as a regular thing, for he had no bed on which he might take his rest. He prolonged his vigils and his prayer as long as his strength allowed, and when his weariness became too great and sleep claimed its rights, he would rest his head on the altar steps or some other convenient place, but always on a stone, like the Patriarch Jacob, and would thus snatch a little rest. On awaking, he renewed the fervour of his soul and his prayer."*

Doubtless none of the Brethren reached this pitch of mortification; still the *Vitae Fratrum* shows us that the early Friars Preachers held this practice in high esteem. Some of them would, after Matins, go down into the body of the church and visit the various altars in turn, praying for the aid of the Saints to whom they were dedicated. Others withdrew to their cells, and devoted this time to study.

The fast was to last from the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14) till Easter. Moreover, during Advent and Lent, on the Ember days, and on certain vigils, the Brethren used only Lenten fare unless their work, or local custom, or the advent of some great Feast, dispensed them from it. When travelling, they were allowed to take two meals, except during Advent and on fast-days ordered

* *Vita B. Dominici*, in the *Opera B. Jordani*, edited by Berthier, O.P., p. 32

by the Church. On Good Friday they had nothing but bread and water (*Constitutions*).

The abstinence was perpetual. "None of the food in any of our convents is to contain meat except it be in the infirmary. . . . Outside the convent the Brethren may, in order not to be a burden to their hosts, partake of food cooked with meat."

This obligation of fasting and abstinence was common to the older Religious Orders. We find it set forth in practically identical terms in the Constitutions of Prémontré, which served as the basis of those of the Friars Preachers. And there was a special reason for St. Dominic's insistence on it at the time he founded the Order; for the Albigenses and the Vaudois made penitential exercises a prominent feature in their life, and paraded their austerity before the world by way of contrast with what they stigmatized as the laxity of the Church. Hence Dominic, in order to combat them, made use of their own weapons, and turned them against themselves. It was he who first, together with the Bishop of Osma, urged the Pontifical Legates and the various preachers sent into that heresy-infected district to take this step.

Moreover, this practice has, independently of external circumstances, advantages for the apostolic preacher of all times. Blessed Humbert points out these gains when he remarks that an apostolic man must, if he would be deserving of his name, give himself to the most continuous study. And nothing, he adds, is more fatal to strenuous intellectual work than the immoderate use of meat. When outside his convent, the preacher will be exposed to many dangers, and nothing save mortification, which

tames the flesh, will keep him safe. Fasting, said a Father of the desert, is the monk's bridle, which will keep him from sin. And then, again, how can a man preach penance, how can he set before men the example of Christ crucified, unless he himself be in this respect another Christ, and thus preach by his life as well as by his words?*

Yet this is far from saying that there is not a discreet mean to be observed. Discretion and prudence have claims which we cannot disregard. "An experienced traveller who has several stages to traverse will look after his horse. It must be the same with preachers, and those who have to lead a life of great activity; they cannot afford to neglect their bodies. A foundered horse may be replaced; not so a foundered body. And if we abuse our strength, sickness and ill-health will soon come along, and we shall find ourselves a burden to others, and a cause of expenses which are hardly compatible with poverty. According to St. Gregory's dictum, abstinence is meant to slay our vices, not to kill our bodies.

"Thus some men of a high degree of virtue practise by preference those forms of abstinence which do little harm to the body, but which are none the less of great assistance in the path of virtue. They deny themselves, for example, such things as fruit, various condiments, and delicate meats—things which only make for luxury."†

* *Expositio Regulae B. Augustini*, in the *Opera B. Humberti*, edited by Berthier, O.P., vol. i., pp. 189 and following.

† Humbert de Romans, *op. cit.*, pp. 198 and following.

In addition to these exterior mortifications, there are others in use in the Order which may be termed "interior": for example, the Chapter of Faults, and the various humiliations which religious life involves.

The Chapter of Faults was, at the commencement, held daily either after Matins or after Prime, unless, indeed, the Superior thought fit to dispense with it, in order to leave more time for study. Since the Rule does not bind under pain of sin, some support for it has to be found in order to prevent abuses creeping in. In the Chapter the Religious accuse themselves publicly of the faults of which they have been guilty. They then listen to any observations which others may, if they think fit, make upon their conduct. But the Constitutions expressly point out here that it must be question of facts; no one can accuse another on mere suspicion. Such "proclamations," as they are called, are an act of charity arranged for in the Rule of St. Augustine. "Do not think yourselves uncharitable," he says, "when you thus point out your neighbours' faults. On the contrary, you would be in fault if, by your silence, you allowed your Brother to fall into sin, when by speaking you might have corrected him. If your Brother had a hidden wound in his body, which he refused to reveal through fear of the surgeon's knife, would it not be cruel to keep silence, and charitable to reveal the wound? How much more, then, are you bound to speak when it is question of corruption of the heart?" It is clear, however, that if sentiments other than these prevailed with a Brother when he made a "proclamation,"—if, for instance, he desired to put another to shame rather than

to help him to amend—he would, to use Blessed Humbert's expression, "commit a diabolical act."*

The penances given in Chapter were as a rule of a very salutary character. A story given in the *Vitae Fratrum* sets this in a very clear light. One day St. Dominic found the devil wandering through various parts of the convent. He asked him why he was doing this. "I do it," he replied, "because of the profits I make here." The Saint asked him what profit he made in the dormitory. "I make," said the Evil One, "the Brothers sleep too long, and so get up late, and thus miss the Divine Office; and when I can, I disturb their imaginations in their sleep." St. Dominic then took him to the choir. "And what do you gain here?" he asked. The devil laughed, and said: "Ah! How often I make them come late, and go out too soon—or, at least, I fill them with distractions!" When asked about the refectory, he exclaimed: "Who does not eat too much or too little?" When they came to the parlour, the devil laughed aloud: "This place," he said, "is mine entirely, for here they laugh and indulge in idle talk and dissipation!" But when the Saint led him to the Chapter-room, the Evil One tried to run away, so frightened was he. "This place is my hell," he said. "Whatever I gain elsewhere I lose here. For here they receive advice; here they accuse themselves, or are accused by others; here they are punished or receive absolution from their faults; hence I detest this place more than any other!"†

Penitential observances, of whatever kind

* Humbert de Romans, *op. cit.*, p. 314.

† *Vitae Fratum*, edited by Reichert, O.P., pp. 78-79.

they may be, remove obstacles which stand in the way of our love of God. Prayer—at least the prayer of petition—kindles this love in our hearts by petitioning for it. Hence prayer occupies a principal place in the life of a Friar Preacher. It is, as it were, the Divine woof on which are traced the delicate outlines of his life of daily activity.

St. Dominic summed up his life and that of his sons in the brief formula: To speak of God or to speak with God. Preaching was the realization of the former, prayer of the latter. And, as we have already explained, it was not without reason that these two points were united. The preacher is not merely a learned man, nor is he simply a man of penance; he is before all things God's herald, the bearer of His word. And thoroughly to grasp the message he has to deliver, to have a vivid sense of its true import, to deliver it with that accent of conviction which is alone persuasive, it is not enough to have read it in books; he must, if we may so express it, have received it from the very mouth of God by intimate conversations with Him in prayer; he must have felt the Spirit of God breathing upon him, making his soul vibrate, and filling him with an apostle's ardour.

The Constitutions and the traditions of the Order have in view a twofold form of prayer—namely, public and private.

The former comprised the day and the night Offices. All the Canonical Hours were chanted. But by contrast with the custom observed in the Benedictine Abbeys, especially in those of Cluny, the Office was to be briskly chanted, "so that the Brethren may not lose devotion,

and may have leisure for study." When commenting on this passage, Blessed Humbert makes this judicious reflection: "In this passage the Constitutions do not assign to study any pre-eminence over prayer; they merely curtail in favour of the latter the excessive length to which prayer may be carried. For it is preferable to have the Office short, with time for study, than to have the Office long, and a consequence hindrance to study, and this because of the numberless advantages that study possesses." This result was attained by adopting a brisk fashion of chanting the Office, and this, while allowing of a more solemn chant on certain Feasts, precluded the Brethren from dragging it out, and especially from lingering on the final syllables.

In small convents, where the Brethren were less numerous, and consequently more occupied, it was sufficient to recite the Office, and not to sing it. But in so reciting it they were to be careful, in order to avoid confusion, not to hurry through the Psalms.*

The Brethren employed in teaching, or in the ministry, or in any other work which Superiors held to be important, might be dispensed from assistance in choir. But all alike had to be present at Compline, so as to end the day by common public prayer, and in order to implore, according to the custom

* "Ubi vero in aliquibus conventibus paucitas fratrum est et in multis occupata, etsi ordinatum sit quod posset dicere conventus officium hujusmodi sine cantu, tamen tunc cavendum est ne confuse dicatur, sed multum tractim et distincte, cum pausis debitis propter conventus reverentiam."—Humbert de Romans, *Expositio in Constitutiones.*

of the Order, the protection of the Mother of God by singing the *Salve Regina*.

When we examine closely the documents of this early period, we are struck by one fact: no one dreams of urging on our notice the Divine Office, though the necessity of private prayer is constantly insisted on. This is because liturgical prayer was the basis, not merely of Religious life, but of the ordinary Christian life. The faithful took part in these exercises several times during the day, and often were present at the night office as well. Hence Religious regarded this as an essential and self-evident duty. Modern times, by emphasizing individual activity, have obscured the traditional forms of devotion.

And yet what a wealth of riches is contained in the liturgical services! When engaged in them, the Dominican gives expression to the great rôle he has to play in the supernatural life led on earth. As an apostle he has to stand midway betwixt God and men; to man he distributes the Divine Truth, to God he presents on behalf of humanity the homage which is His due. And the Choral Office, a penitential work in some respects, is, beyond all, the solemn expression of that Divine worship of which the Holy Eucharist is the crown. Words of adoration, of praise, of thanksgiving—acts of sorrow, too—are all to be found there; so that the Office gathers together in one sonorous anthem the varying voices of the whole Christian world, and, as the official worship of the Church, presents them all, humble and suppliant, before the throne of God. Even as the wreaths of incense smoke float around the sanctuary

vault, so do these same prayers mount to the feet of the Eternal.

And even apart from its public and official celebration, the Divine Office is for all who recite it a wondrous form of prayer; it answers to all our needs in all their forms, and gives expression to our highest aspirations.

The Church herself has given it an organized form, and has borrowed its component parts from Holy Scripture and the writings of the Fathers. The Psalms which form its groundwork are a never-ceasing supplication; in them the soul of the inspired singer pours itself forth in accents of more than human tenderness and beauty. And when we recite them constantly, which of us does not feel, at least from time to time, his heart swelling within him in unison with the Psalmist's words? Who does not deem himself happy and privileged in having to repeat the very phrases which throughout the course of centuries have given expression to the love, the sorrow, the fear, and the confidence, of the noblest and the holiest of souls?

Yet none the less there are times when a Religious feels the need of a somewhat greater liberty in his prayer. Putting aside all fixed forms, he goes straight to God, according to the inspiration of the moment, and, though no words escape him, he yet communes with his God in the depths of his heart.

We call this "meditation," or "prayer," but this particular form of prayer was known to the early Friars Preachers as "secret prayer." And they held it in great esteem. The *Vitae Fratrum* gives us numerous examples of it, and Blessed Humbert de Romans constantly urges it. "This form of devotion," he says, "is a

clear sign of sanctity; he who practises it will hardly be lost, and will assuredly make great progress in religion. Our Saviour Himself set us the example, and after Him the Apostles. Practically all the Saints have practised it . . . and on this head the Blessed Dominic, our Father, is our special model, for he passed entire nights in prayer. Our early Brethren, too, practised it, as those who knew them have told us. One of them came one day to Paris. On entering our church there, he remarked none of the Brethren at prayer. Calling to mind the tiny chapel he had remembered at Paris, a chapel always filled with Religious absorbed in prayer, he asked what church this might be. When he was told it was that of the Friars Preachers, he began to protest, saying: 'No, no; that cannot be true, for the Preachers' church was small, and quite filled with Religious prostrate in prayer before the different altars, whereas here there is nothing of the kind.' This incident," concludes Blessed Humbert, "clearly shows how assiduous in prayer our early Fathers must have been."*

At the same time neither the Rule nor the early Constitutions laid down anything definite on this point. But the custom was there, and it was soon assigned a regular place in Dominican life. The Brethren gave themselves to this devout exercise either after Matins or after Compline. It lasted for the space of the Seven Penitential Psalms and the Litanies, or until a bell was rung by the Sacristan to indicate its close.

Everyone gave free rein to his devotion.

* *Expositio super Constitutiones*, in the *Opera B. Humberti*, edited by Berthier, O.P., vol. ii., pp. 91-92.

Some meditated on a particular mystery, others on the Divine attributes. Others, again, were absorbed in certain particular forms of prayer which they had made their own. We know how St. Dominic occupied his long vigils; the witnesses of his life have left us an account of it. "He was wont," says Brother Stephen, the Provincial of Lombardy, "to stay in the church after Compline and the prayer in common were over. Then, having seen the Brethren into the dormitory, he passed the night in prayer, weeping and groaning. Sometimes his sobs and his cries would awaken the Brethren who slept near by, and would move them even to tears." And, after his example, many Religious who were more especially fervent would prolong their vigils, or would during the day set apart some time for the purpose of giving themselves to prayer or devout reading.

Thus, in accordance with the example of St. Dominic, St. Thomas read assiduously the *Conferences* of Cassian. "Since it frequently happens that deep and subtle speculation lessens affective devotion, the Saint, in order to stir up such devotion, read every day a certain portion of the *Conferences of the Fathers*. And when he was asked why he thus interrupted his intellectual work, he replied: "Because by means of this kind of reading I renew my devotion, and can then return more easily to speculation."*

At the same time, prayer was not to be allowed, any more than study, to absorb the whole life of a Friar Preacher. On no account was he, under pretext of prayer, to neglect

* William of Tocco, *Vita S. Thomae Aquinatis*, in the *Acta Sanctorum*, vol. i., Martii, p. 667; Venice, 1735.

some other duty. "Be well assured," says Blessed Humbert, "that not only works of the spiritual order, such as study, the Divine Office, and similar occupations, but even corporal works which are necessary for our daily support, as, for instance, the Procurator's work, or similar offices, as well as the mutual services we have to render to one another, can never be neglected on the pretext that we need time for prayers which are not of obligation. . . . For while it is perfectly certain that the above-mentioned tasks are useful, no one knows for certain whether his prayer is going to be so efficacious with God as to provide for his own needs and those of others. And it is clear that an undoubted good must prevail over a doubtful one. Besides, it sometimes happens that prayer is but an excuse for idleness."*

Here once more it is a just moderation which is characteristic of the Order, and perfection is held to consist not so much in minute zeal with regard to this or that point as in a careful attention to the whole.

* *Expositio Regulae B. Augustini*, in the *Opera B. Humberti*, edited by P. Berthier, O.P., vol. iii., p. 177.

CHAPTER VI

RELIGIOUS FORMATION—GOVERNMENT OF THE ORDER

WE have seen how recruits flocked to the convents of the Order. Men of all ages, some of them mere students, others already Masters of great renown, laymen, and clerics, young men who had only just ceased to be boys, and men of ripe years, all came flocking in crowds to ask for the habit of the Friars Preachers. But all alike, no matter what their antecedents, had to be impregnated with the ideal of the Order, had to drink deeply of its life, and had, if need were, to examine themselves seriously before God ere they ventured to bind themselves "until death."

At the commencement of the Order there does not appear to have been any uniform procedure on this point. The obligation of undergoing a novitiate did not as yet exist, and men of proved virtue made their profession at the same time that they received the habit, or even before doing so if special circumstances demanded that they should stay in the world for some time longer. Thus John of Navarre, who, according to his own testimony, received the habit from the hands of St. Dominic on August 28, 1217, made profession "on the same

day" in the church of St. Romanus at Toulouse.* It would seem, too, that Blessed Reginald, according to Blessed Jordan's account, made his profession before his departure for the Holy Land, though he did not actually enter the Order till his return.† And in Blessed Jordan's own case there is no room for doubt; for when Reginald died, Jordan had not received the habit, and yet he had "made profession" in the hands of the Saint so untimely taken from this world. It was the same with Jordan's bosom friend, Henry, afterwards Prior of Cologne.‡

For such men the novitiate as we now understand it had no existence; they were at once set to apostolic work. Blessed Jordan had only belonged to the convent of Saint-Jacques for two months when he was chosen to go as

* *Dicta Testium super Inquisitione Facta de Vita, Obitu et Miraculis B. Dominici*, vol. iv., *Frater Joannes Hispanus*, in Quétif-Echard, *Scriptores, O.P.*, vol. i., pp. 49-50: "Dixit quod in illo anno quo confirmatus fuit ordo Praedicatorum in concilio D. Innocentii Papae III., ipse testis intravit ordinem istum, et in festo S. Augustini proximo venturo erunt octodecim anni, sicut frater credidit de tempore, quod recepit habitum de maru Fratris Dominici plantatoris ipsius ordinis et primi magistri, et *ipsa die* fecit professionem in manu praedicti Fratris in ecclesia S. Romani apud Tolosam."

† "Magister Reginaldus sanitate recepta *Licet Jam Professione Ordini Teneretur*, ad complendum desiderium suum mare pertransiit. . . ."—*De Initiis Ordinis*, in the *Opera B. Humberti*, edited by Berthier, p. 18.

‡ "Visum est mihi, nondum quidem secundum habitum Fratri, sed in ipsius (Reginaldi) manibus jam professo. . . ." "Unum scio neminem apud Parisios praeter duos ipsum (Reginaldum) ad professionem Ordinis suscepisse: quorum quidem ego primus, alter vero F. Humbertus, postmodum prior Coloniensis. . . ." —*Ibid.*, p. 20.

delegate to the Chapter of Bologna. In the subsequent year, 1221, he was named Provincial of Lombardy, and in the next year, 1222, was made General of the entire Order.

This want of precision in the Rule could not be allowed to last, and from 1228, at the latest, efforts were made to have the point settled. The General Chapter of Paris, or one of the preceding ones, decided that the novices were to undergo six months' probation, or even longer if the Prior thought fit. During this time they tested their own will, and also made trial of the austerities of the Order; and the Order, for its part, studied their dispositions. At the same time, if a man of serious turn and of mature judgment voluntarily declined this period of probation, and earnestly begged to be admitted without delay, he could be allowed to make his profession at once. In 1236, however, Gregory IX., in a Constitution which was renewed by Innocent. IV. in 1244, insisted upon a novitiate of one year. During the whole of that period a novice was perfectly free to leave the Order. By degrees the Dominican legislation on this point developed and strengthened until fresh decisions of the Holy See introduced other modifications.

Before receiving the habit, the postulant had to answer certain questions, and give assurances that no duty made it incumbent on him to remain in the world. The Prior, assisted by his council and the conventual Chapter, decided whether he was to be admitted. If the decision was favourable, he was admitted with practically no delay.

On the appointed day the postulant is admitted to the Chapter-room. There, in presence

of the whole community, he prostrates himself on the pavement. "What is it you seek?" asks the Prior; and the postulant replies: "God's mercy and yours." On a signal being given, he rises and listens standing, while the Prior sets before him the austerities of the Order, and the obligations he will take upon himself if he perseveres in his wish. This address ends with the words: "Do you still wish, by the grace of God, to undertake all this, according to your strength?" "I do," he answers. And the Prior, amid a silence which is always impressive, expresses a desire which is at the same time a prayer: "May God complete what he has begun!" to which the community answers, "Amen." Then, while the strains of the *Veni Creator*, strains full of solemnity and of touching feeling, mount towards Heaven, the postulant lays aside his secular garb, and the Prior clothes him in the habit of the Order—the long tunic and the white scapular, and over them the black cloak. The Brethren then lead him before the altar of the choir. There he prostrates himself once more on the sanctuary steps, his arms extended in the form of a cross, while he humbly listens to the prayers of the liturgy, which implore Heaven's blessing upon him. Then he stands erect, and, while all unite in singing the *Te Deum*, he receives from each the kiss of peace, a symbol of the new Brotherhood into which he has just been received.

Henceforth he is a Religious, and the Master of novices, to whose care he is now entirely confided, has to form him in the habits called for by his new life. The Constitutions of 1239 enter into minute details on this subject, and

Blessed Humbert has dwelt upon them at length in his chapters on various offices.

The novice's home is now the convent. In the thirteenth century the convents were often erected quite on the outskirts of a town because it was easier to acquire land there on which the convent could extend itself as required. Our novice's life was henceforth to be passed in a cloister, separated from the world by a courtyard, or "atrium." "A cloister is a court surrounded by porticos. In the centre, in accordance with ancient tradition, springs a fountain, symbolical of that 'fountain of water that springeth up into life everlasting.' Under the pavement of the cloister are the graves of the departed members; along the walls are the obits of the dead; on the arches of the roof are painted scenes from the lives of the Saints of the Order, some of whom may have lived in that very cloister. This place is sacred; the Religious only walk there in silence, occupied with the thought either of those who have gone before, or of their own death."* In the upper story are dormitories, where slight partitions separate the occupants, though the cubicles remain open in front or on one side; while near them, cut off from all noise and disturbance, are closed cells, where lectors and students are occupied with study. "The cells of these cenobites are small, just large enough to contain a couch of straw or horse-hair, a table, and two chairs. A crucifix and a few pious pictures are their only ornament."† Nothing interrupted this hard and continuous

* Lacordaire, *Vie de Saint-Dominique*, p. 148; Paris, 1872.

† *Ibid.*, p. 149.

toil save certain exercises in common at stated hours.

The church, in accordance with St. Dominic's intention, was to display no superfluous ornamentation; yet it often betrayed a pronounced artistic taste—austere, perhaps, but impressive. A nave, sometimes two, was marked off by lines of pillars. The choir, often closed by a rood-loft, terminated the nave, or, if there were two naves, stood apart in one of them.* The altar was at the end, so that the Religious might conveniently watch the majestic liturgical service. Hither the novice came during the night, and often during the day, to pray and to sing the Divine Office; and in this atmosphere, redolent of the piety of his predecessors, his soul steeped itself day by day in that supernatural life which was to form the basis of all that he did.

As a rule the refectory opened on to the cloister, and stood on the side opposite to the church. Of large extent, with stone columns and arched roof, its very arrangement served to impress the mind with those grave thoughts which were to be for ever the subject of his meditations. Further along the cloister were the Chapter-room and the lecture-rooms. And with a calm regularity, and a quiet enthusiasm which precluded all feeling of monotony, the novice was to pass his days in these different portions of the convent. Prayer, study, and mortification, were gradually to approximate him to that ideal which he had chosen for himself. And in this cloistered life, where the world had no longer any hold on him, his soul,

* *Cf.* G. Rohault de Fleury, *Gallia Dominicana* Paris, 1903.

freed from care, was to mount ever more easily towards a perfection which grew greater day by day.

The year of probation over, the novice, if on examination he were judged worthy, and if he himself still persevered in his design, was received to profession. The ceremonial on this occasion has always been simple in the extreme. The absence of all external splendour sets in clear light the superhuman beauty and the profound signification of what is taking place. Great sacrifices call for no solemn display, still less for any long and formal ceremonies. Here it is simply a man who is giving himself to God, wholly, unreservedly, until death. And he says so in a few brief words shorn of all rhetoric; yet no one who retains any sense of supramundane realities can fail to be stirred to the very depths of his soul when he witnesses such a scene.

With his hands laid between those of the Prior, and resting on the book of the Constitutions, kneeling like some vassal of old before his suzerain, the novice pronounces in a loud voice the formula which is to decide his life for ever: "I, Brother N., make profession and promise obedience to God, to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and to the Blessed Dominic, and to you, Brother N., Prior of this convent, and holding the place of the Most Reverend N., Master-General of the Order and of his successors, according to the Rule of St. Augustine and the Constitutions of the Friars Preachers. To you and to your successors I promise obedience until death." The Prior then blesses the scapular of the newly professed, gives him the kiss of peace, and all is over.

If the Novice-Master thought fit, the newly professed might be left some time longer in the novitiate, and under his own special care. At any rate, before taking part in the really active life of the Order, the Religious has to complete his formation, if need be. Study and the interior life are to enable him to acquire, more especially if he be young and inexperienced, the qualities needful for exercising his ministry with devotion and tact. He cannot be a priest before he is twenty-five years old, nor will he be able as a rule to hear confessions outside the Order until he is thirty.* At the same time he begins by degrees to take his share in the active life of the Order. According to the General Chapter of 1236, he could take part in the election of the Prior of the convent after he had been professed a year; in 1255 this was extended to two years.†

In the Dominican Order the government is shared by a large number of the Religious; this fact gives to the Order a character of its own, and at the same time marks it off clearly from both the older monastic foundations and from more modern Orders. And though the Order

* The substance of these different enactments remains the same to-day though they have been modified by various ecclesiastical laws. As things now are, a novice makes simple, but perpetual, vows, after one year's probation. His novitiate, however, lasts another four years; at the close of the third of these he takes his solemn vows; at the end of the fourth he can, if he has the requisite qualifications, be ordained priest.

† The legislation on this point has varied from time to time. At present, in order to enjoy the right to vote, a Religious must have completed nine years from his simple profession.

has adopted the monarchical form of government, it has modified this by the introduction of what may be termed aristocratic and democratic elements. According to St. Thomas, the government of the Order is of the most perfect kind, since the inconveniences which might arise under one form are counteracted by the advantages derived from another.* From the very beginning St. Dominic adopted this type of government, as is shown by his frequent appeals to the votes and to the advice of his companions. Thus, he consulted them on the choice of a Rule and Constitutions, and, since they were opposed to it, he gave up his own views regarding the position of the lay-Brethren in the Order. Again, in conjunction with the Brethren, and through their instrumentality, he, on the dispersion of the Order in 1217, decided the mode of government which was to hold provisional sway. They all took part in the election of Matthew of France. He was to govern with the title of Abbot, but St. Dominic was to retain his powers as Founder, with the right to correct all and single if they appeared to fall short of his ideal.

But these were only provisionary appointments. Before a permanent and practical form of government could be established, the Order would have to attain a much more considerable development, and would have to learn the lessons taught by experience, the best of all teachers. Hence, as a matter of fact, the real legislation regarding the government of the Order only dates from 1220, when the first Chapter of Bologna mapped out with prudence

* *Summa Theol.*, IIa., IIae ; Q. CV., Art. 1.

and clearness the broad lines it was to follow, and these were to remain practically untouched.

The older Religious bodies were little more than agglomerations of independent entities. Each abbey, with its head, the Abbot, and the various officials of the house, formed a complete whole. Thus it is hardly correct to speak of the Benedictine *Order*, for among the Benedictines there is no central authority which serves to weld together the various Abbeys. They had, of course, one common spirit arising from the observance of the same Rule, though even this took on different aspects according to divers "customaries"; but they had not that mutual dependence which springs from the existence of one Superior, the head of the Order. Still, by degrees some of the more active Abbeys assumed, owing to various causes, a certain predominance, and so grouped around them other monasteries which were dependent on them. This was the origin of the Cluniac reform. And this grouping led to the institution of Visitators, whose duty it was to maintain uniformity by compelling the observance of the customs of Cluny, and by the unflinching assertion of the rights of the Mother Abbey.

The foundation at Citeaux still further developed this unifying process, while avoiding the excessive centralization which had characterized Cluny. The *Charta Charitatis* laid down this form of government from the outset: "It maintained the family spirit in the monasteries, set up a hierarchical federation of the Abbeys, subjected all the Abbots—including the Abbot of Citeaux—to the jurisdiction of the General Chapter, and placed the entire Order under the authority of a single written Con-

stitution, which was accepted by all, and was thus protected from all arbitrary interpretation."*

There can be little doubt that the Friars Preachers drew their inspiration from this source. Their relations with the Cistercian Abbeys had been too intimate for them not to have become acquainted with the customs of Citeaux. But at the same time they developed them on more than one point.

With the Friars Preachers there is both a greater complexity and a greater simplicity. For while among the Cistercians each Religious depends almost solely on his Abbot, each Friar Preacher, on the contrary, is directly subject to the Master-General. It is to him that he promises obedience at his profession, and consequently it is upon him that he ultimately depends. In this sense it is true to say that there is only one head of the Order, the Master-General who has supreme authority over all and each of the Religious, wherever they are, or in whatever convent. At the same time, the extent of the Order demanded its division into Provinces governed by a Prior Provincial, and these Provinces are composed of a certain number of convents. According to the Constitutions, "the Prior Provincial has in his Province the same rights as the General," and we can, with certain reservations, say the same of the conventual Prior in his own convent. Thus, the Master-General, the Priors Provincial and Conventual, represent the monarchical ele-

* Dom. U. Berlière, *Les Origines de Citeaux et l'Ordre Bénédictin au XII^e siècle*, in the *Revue d'Histoire Ecclés.*, vol. i., p. 458; 1900.

ment of the Order; but this is, in turn, subject to the action of other principles.

Election, as already remarked, plays a very important part in the Order; and this feature, as in a democracy, gives to the entire body a considerable share in the government. Thus, all the choir Religious who have been professed a certain number of years have a voice in the election of the Prior of the convent to which they belong. They can also choose from each convent a delegate who, with the Conventual Priors and certain others enjoying the same privilege, helps to elect the Provincial Prior at the Provincial Chapter. Similarly, the members of the Provincial Chapter elect delegates who, with the Provincials of the Order, elect the General of the Order. Thus the entire hierarchy of Superiors, from the highest to the lowest, depends on election.

But a democracy is not mob rule. Consequently, the rights of the mass of the Brethren are controlled by the existing supreme authority; and when it is a question of electing the General, the General Chapter then sitting is regarded as representing that authority for the time being. Similarly, the election of the Prior of a convent is not valid unless confirmed by the Provincial, while that of the Provincial has to be confirmed by the Master-General. And in both these cases the election has to take place within a definite space of time, and under certain conditions which are clearly laid down, otherwise the electors lose their rights and the supreme authority can appoint a Provincial Prior just as the latter can, in a similar case, name a Prior of a convent.

Further, no existing Superior is irresponsible.* All of them—Priors Provincial and Conventual, as well as the Master-General himself—are subject to the Chapters which constitute the regulating and legislative element in the Order. The Provincial Chapters, for instance, examine into the behaviour and conduct of the Priors of convents; they can correct them, and can decide whether it is advisable to retain them in their posts. They can also make rules for the government of the Province, and can name Visitators. Similarly, the General Chapter lays down rules for the government of the entire Order, and examines into the conduct of the Master-General. This General Chapter is a legislative assembly, but for its decisions to become law they need to be confirmed by two successive General Chapters. This prudent arrangement obviates hasty decisions, and precludes precautionary measures from becoming

* The length of time during which these offices were held varied at different periods. The General Chapter of 1242 decided that the conventual Priors should hold office for two years, the Provincial Priors for four years. But, as a matter of fact, this legislation does not seem to have had much effect, for the conventual and Provincial Priors were subjected every year to a scrutiny "de absolutione vel retentione" and, according to the votes of the convent or the Province respectively on this head, the Provincial or General Chapters confirmed them in their office or removed them from it. Later on, though after various fluctuations, it was decided that the Conventual Priors should hold office for three years, and the Provincial Priors for four. This is the rule at the present time.

At first the Master-General held office for life, unless, of course, he were deposed. In 1804 Pius VII limited his term of office to six years, and in 1862 Pius IX. changed it to twelve. This latter rule holds good now.

laws, and so disturbing long-standing tradition. Practice and the experience of time must show whether such measures are well founded before they can assume definitive form.

And beyond all these safeguards there remains the authority of the Holy See which freely intervenes when it seems wise to do so; but this is an extrinsic element to which recourse is only had in extraordinary cases.

Many minute details serve to direct the management of this vast organism. But the simple design of the fabric as a whole shows what was the idea of St. Dominic and his contemporaries. They wished to give the Order an authority which should be unassailable, since it could always demand obedience; but at the same time they kept this authority within wise limits by imposing on it a control from below to which it was bound at regular intervals to submit.

Thus once more we notice in the Order of Friars Preachers a lofty ideal combined with a consummate prudence.

CHAPTER VII

THE LAY-BROTHERS

UNLIKE the older Religious Orders, the Order of Friars Preachers is essentially an Order of Clerics. Its whole *raison d'être* demands priests, and consequently there is no place for the large numbers of lay-Brethren who populated the early Benedictine monasteries in which priests were the exception.

But since the Order and its members were, owing to the conditions of human life, subject to divers material necessities, provision had to be made for these. It became, then, a question of either diverting the Fathers from their apostolic work, or of admitting lay-Brethren, whose business it should be to occupy themselves exclusively with the material work of the house. The latter solution was adopted as being more in conformity with the demands of good government. Anxious to secure to the Fathers the greatest possible liberty for their work of preaching, St. Dominic, for his own part, had formed the idea of leaving to these lay-Brethren the whole of the temporal administration. He even proposed this to the assembly at Prouille when the question of the Constitutions to be adopted was discussed, but his companions pointed out the inconveniences which would arise from such a method, and he consequently gave up the notion. Perhaps they had before their minds a scandal which had but recently arisen in an Abbey at Grandmont,

where a similar practice was in vogue; there the lay-Brethren had gradually abused their power, had wasted the property of the monastery, and had actually imprisoned the Abbot!

But though thus placed in a secondary position, the lay-Brethren proved useful allies in the work which was inaugurated. We find one of them among the first companions of St. Dominic; he was a Norman by birth, and called Odoric. In 1217, when the first dispersion of the Brethren took place, he formed one of the party that went to Paris. Another, called John, accompanied St. Dominic when he returned, in 1219, to Italy, after his journey into Spain. Whilst crossing the Alps, the compassionate kindness of the Saint saved this Brother, by a miracle, from exhaustion, and even from death. A few years later he set out for Morocco where he ended his days by a holy death.* Others followed in the footsteps of these first recruits, and spent their lives in hidden service of the new band of apostles.

Very many, apparently, asked to enter among the ranks of the lay-Brethren; but, faithful to its principles, the Order only accepted them in proportion to its needs. Authentic documents show us how strict they were on this point. Peter of Denmark writes to his spiritual daughter, Christine of Stommeln: "I must inform you that, contrary to all expectation, the matter has been successfully arranged. And if you knew how much the Fathers deliberate before admitting a lay-brother, you would look upon it as almost a miracle, or at least as a special intervention of Providence, that the brother has been so easily received."

* *Vitae Fratrum*, edited by Reichert, pp. 72-73.

And, in accordance with this same principle, the Order demanded, or at least judged it wiser, that lay-postulants should be skilled in some manual art, so as to be better able to assist the community. The Chapters frequently insist on this point, though they never make it an essential condition for admission.

The work of the lay-Brethren was of various kinds, and differed according to their own aptitudes and according to the needs of the convent. The management of farms for the Sisters, as well as the begging from house to house which principally fell to their share, have now disappeared. But otherwise their occupations have remained the same throughout the history of the Order. Cooks, refectorians, tailors, shoemakers, gardeners, assistants to the Father Sacristan and the Father Infirmarian, porters, etc., all these existed in the thirteenth century, and will continue to exist as long as the Order shall endure.

And, whatever his work, the lay-brother has to devote himself to it with his whole heart. His work comes before everything, even before such prayers as are not of obligation. "If," says Blessed Humbert, "the choir-Brethren, who by their vocation are called upon to occupy themselves with spiritual things, have to be careful to avoid as an abuse prayers so extended as to be a source of inconvenience, how much more must this be the case with the lay-Brethren who are meant to devote themselves to manual work?" And he goes on to say: "A lay-brother who finishes without unnecessary delay the brief prayers to which he is bound, and who after that is not anxious to hear a number of Masses, to get to the High Mass, or to serve at it, who puts aside all idea of long

and unusual prayers, and who does all this with the intention of giving his time to his manual labour—such a one undoubtedly fulfils his duty far more than one who does just the opposite, and who hardly works day or night. Such a man as the last-named might be a real danger to an Order which is poor and depends upon alms. And, as a matter of fact, he who is unable to sow spiritual seed, and yet does nothing to compensate for this, has no right to live on charity."*

The lay-brother's rule is, as regards his interior life, practically the same as that of the other Religious. Like them, he is bound by vows, and has to observe the fast and the abstinence. And when the choir-Brethren recite the Office in choir, the lay-brother has to recite instead a certain number of *Paters* and *Aves*. And even if the lay-Brethren are illiterate, they have to know the principal truths of religion and certain prayers appropriate to their state of life. In the beginning, books of any kind were forbidden them, and they were taught by word of mouth the Catechism and the prayers which they had to know. At the present day their habit is the same as that of the choir-Brethren, except that the scapular worn by the lay-Brethren is black instead of white. In the early days of the Order they wore, instead of a cappa or cloak, a somewhat fuller scapular, which fell over their arms; but it is noticeable that even at that early period different Chapters had to insist that the differences between the dress of the choir-Brethren and the lay-Brethren should be rigorously observed.

* *Expositio Regulae B. Augustini*, in the *Opera B. Humberti*, edited by Berthier, pp. 180-181.

Though at first sight the lives of the lay-Brethren may seem to differ very largely from those led by the choir-Brethren, yet they are fundamentally the same. All, whether choir- or lay-Brethren, have one and the same object in view, the one object of the Order—namely, the apostolate. And all combine, though in different ways, in working for its attainment. A lay-brother can by his prayers, as indeed can any Christian, draw down the grace of God on sinners; but he is certainly in more direct touch with the apostolic life when he is engaged in manual occupations. For however lowly his task, it is precisely the lay-brother's fulfilment of such tasks that enables the preacher to carry the word of life to suffering souls, to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. It is just these tasks which the lay-brother performs which enable the choir-brother to feel free. Tasks such as these are indeed a necessary part of life, yet if the choir-brother had to perform them himself, they would infallibly limit his power of active work, and thus hinder the administration of those graces of which he is the appointed instrument. A Friar Preacher, then, the lay-brother most certainly is; for he not only works for his own salvation, but also strives to obtain, though through the ministry of others, the salvation of a great number besides himself. What matter, then, if he be ignorant of learning? What matter if even his prayers are shortened by the demands of his manual work? For he has devoted his whole life to the apostolate, the supreme object of the Order to which he has given himself unreservedly!

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